

PACIFIC REGION

INTEGRATED FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN

JULY 1, 2026 - JUNE 30, 2027

SALMON
SOUTHERN BC



Genus *Oncorhynchus*



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Canada

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This Integrated Fisheries Management Plan is intended for general purposes only. Where there is a discrepancy between the Plan and the Fisheries Act and Regulations, the Act and Regulations are the final authority. A description of Areas and Subareas referenced in this Plan can be found in the Pacific Fishery Management Area Regulations, 2007.

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ACTS, ORDERS, AND REGULATIONS

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/acts-lois/index-eng.htm>

Atlantic Fisheries Restructuring Act, Canada Shipping Act, Coastal Fisheries Protection Act, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Act, Financial Administration Act, Fisheries Act, Fisheries Development Act, Fisheries Improvements Loan Act, Fishing and Recreational Harbours Act, Freshwater Fish Marketing Act, Great Lakes Fisheries Convention Act, Oceans Act, Species at Risk Act

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports-eng.htm>

Administration and Enforcement of the Fish Habitat Protection and Pollution Prevention Provisions of the *Fisheries Act*, Audit and Evaluation Reports - Audit and Evaluation Directorate, Canadian Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing Operations, Departmental Performance Reports, Fisheries Research Documents, Standing Committee's Reports and Government responses, Sustainable Development Strategy

FEDERAL SCIENCE LIBRARIES NETWORK

<https://science-libraries.canada.ca/eng/fisheries-oceans/>

Fisheries and Oceans Canada online library catalogue

PACIFIC SALMON TREATY

<http://www.psc.org>

Background information; full text of the treaty

PACIFIC REGION GENERAL INFORMATION

MAIN PAGE

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index-eng.html>

General information, Area information, Latest news, Current topics

POLICIES, REPORTS AND AGREEMENTS

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/publications/fisheries-peche-eng.html>

Reports and Discussion Papers, New Directions Policy Series, Agreements

OCEANS PROGRAM

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/index-eng.html>

Integrated Coastal Management; Marine Protected Areas; Areas of Interest; Canada's Ocean Strategy; *Oceans Act*

PACIFIC REGION FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

MAIN PAGE

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/index-eng.html>

Commercial Fisheries, Indigenous Fisheries, Recreational Fisheries, Maps, Notices and Plans, International Management, Enforcement

ABORIGINAL FISHERIES STRATEGY

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/aboriginal-autochtones/index-eng.htm>

Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) principles and objectives; AFS agreements; Programs; Treaty Negotiations

AQUACULTURE MANAGEMENT

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/index-eng.html>

The federal regulatory program for aquaculture in British Columbia; Program overview and administration and public reporting.

RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/index-eng.html>

Fishery Regulations and Notices, Fishing Information, Recreational Fishery, Policy and Management, Contacts, Current BC Tidal Waters Sport Fishing Guide and Freshwater Supplement; Rockfish Conservation Areas, Shellfish Contamination Closures; On-line Licencing

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/peches-fisheries/comm/index-eng.htm>

Links to Groundfish, Herring, Salmon, Shellfish and New and Emerging Fisheries homepages; Selective Fishing, Test Fishing Information, Fishing Areas, Canadian Tide Tables, Fishery Management Plans, Commercial Fishery Notices (openings and closures)

INITIATIVE TO UPDATE THE COMMERCIAL SALMON ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/saf-crrs/index-eng.html>

Links to the Departments' consultation website which provides an overview of the process to update the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework (CSAF), including links to summary reports and submissions with recommendations.

FISHERIES NOTICES

https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=pub_reg

Want to receive fishery notices by e-mail? If you are a recreational sport fisher, processor, multiple boat owner or re-distribute fishery notices, register your name and/or company at the web-site address above. Openings and closures, updates, and other relevant information regarding your chosen fishery are sent directly to your registered email. It's quick, it's easy and it's free.

INTEGRATED FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/peches-fisheries/ifmp-gmp/index-eng.htm>

Current Management Plans for Groundfish, Pelagics, Shellfish (Invertebrates), minor finfish, Salmon; sample Licence Conditions; Archived Management Plans

SALMON TEST FISHERY - PACIFIC REGION

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pacific-smon-pacifique/science/research-recherche/testfishery-pechedessai-eng.html>

Definition, description, location and target stocks

LICENCING

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/licence-permis/index-eng.html>

Contact information; Recreational Licencing Information, Commercial Licence Types, Commercial Licence Areas, Licence Listings, Vessel Information, Vessel Directory, Licence Statistics and Application Forms

NATIONAL ONLINE LICENSING SYSTEM (NOLS)

<https://fishing-peche.dfo-mpo.gc.ca>

E-mail: fishing-peche@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

(Please include your name and the DFO Region in which you are located.)

Telephone: 1-877-535-7307

TTY: 1-800-465-7735

SALMON

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/index-eng.html>

Salmon Facts; Salmon Fisheries; Enhancement and Conservation; Research and Assessment; Consultations; Policies, Reports and Agreements; Glossary of Salmon Terms

FRASER AND INTERIOR AREA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND STOCK ASSESSMENT

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/index-eng.html>

Contact information; Test fishing and survey results (Albion, creel surveys, First Nations); Fraser River Sockeye and Pink escapement updates; Important notices; Recreational fishing information

NORTH COAST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/northcoast-cotenord/index-eng.html>

First Nations fisheries, Recreational fisheries; Commercial salmon and herring fisheries; Skeena Tyee test fishery; Counting facilities; Post-season Review; Contacts

YUKON/TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS AREA MAIN PAGE

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/yukon/index-eng.html>

Fisheries Management; Recreational fisheries; Habitat; Licencing; Contacts

PACIFIC REGION SALMONID ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

MAIN PAGE

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/sep-pmvs/index-eng.html>

Publications (legislation, policy, guidelines, educational resources, brochures, newsletters and bulletins, papers and abstracts, reports); GIS maps and Data (habitat inventories, spatial data holdings, land use planning maps); Community involvement (advisors and coordinators, educational materials, habitat conservation and Stewardship Program, projects, Stream Talk).

PACIFIC REGION POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

MAIN PAGE

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index-eng.html>

Media Releases; Salmon Updates, Backgrounders, Ministers Statements, Publications; Contacts

Consultation Secretariat

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/index-eng.html>

Consultation Calendar; Policies; National; Partnerships; Fisheries Management, Oceans, Science and Habitat and Enhancement Consultations; Current and Concluded Consultations

Publications Catalogue

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/publications/index-eng.html>

Information booklets and fact sheets available through Communications branch

Species at Risk Act (SARA)

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/sara-lep/index-eng.html>

SARA species; SARA permits; public registry; enforcement; Stewardship projects; Consultation; Past Consultation; First Nations; Related Sites; News Releases

PACIFIC REGION SCIENCE

MAIN PAGE

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/index-eng.html>

Science divisions; Research facilities; PSARC; International Research Initiatives

GLOSSARY AND LIST OF ACRONYMS

A comprehensive glossary is available online at:

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/gloss-eng.html>

List of acronyms used in this plan:

ACRONYM	PHRASE
AABM	Aggregate Abundance-Based Management
AAROM	Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management
AHC	Area Harvest Committee
AFS	Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy
ATP	Allocation Transfer Program
B _{MSY}	Biomass at Maximum Sustainable Yield
CCTAC	Canadian Commercial Total Allowable Catch
CTAC	Canadian Total Allowable Catch
CEDP	Community Economic Development Program
COHO ABM	Coho Abundance-Based Management
COSEWIC	Committee for the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
CPUE	Catch Per Unit Effort
CSAB	Commercial Salmon Advisory Board
CSAP	The Centre for Scientific Advice Pacific
CSAS	The Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat
CSAF	Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework
CU	Conservation Unit

ACRONYM	PHRASE
CWT	Coded Wire Tag
DBE	Difference Between Estimates
DIDSON	Dual Frequency Identification Sonar
DU	Designatable Unit
EO	Economic Opportunity
ER	Exploitation Rate
ESSR	Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirements
FNFC	First Nations Fishery Council
FOS	Fishery Operating System
FRP	Fraser River Panel
FRSSI	Fraser River Sockeye Salmon Initiative
FSC	Food, Social and Ceremonial
FSMB	Fraser Salmon Management Board
FSMC	Fraser Salmon Management Council
GN	Gill Net
HA	Harvest Agreement
HG	Haida Gwaii
ITQ	Individual Transfer Quota
IHPC	Integrated Harvest Planning Committee
IFR	Interior Fraser River
iREC	Internet Recreational Effort and Catch reporting program

ACRONYM	PHRASE
ISBM	Individual Stock-Based Management
ISC	Inside Southern Chum
LAER	Low Abundance Exploitation Rate
LGS	Lower Strait of Georgia
LRP	Limit Reference Points
MA	Management Adjustment
MCC	Marine Conservation Caucus
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSF	Mark-selective fishery
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
MU	Management Unit
MVI	Mid Vancouver Island
NMCAR	National Marine Conservation Area Reserve
NOLS	National On-line Licensing System
NWA	National Wildlife Area
PA	Precautionary Approach
pDBE	Proportional Difference Between Estimates
PICFI	Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
PFMA	Pacific Fisheries Management Areas
pMA	Proportional Management Adjustment
PSC	Pacific Salmon Commission

ACRONYM	PHRASE
PNCIMA	Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area
PSM	Pre-Spawn Mortality
PSSI	Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative
PST	Pacific Salmon Treaty
RCA	Rockfish Conservation Area
SARA	Species at Risk Act
SCC	First Nations Salmon Coordinating Committee
SEG	Sustainable Escapement Goal
SEP	Salmonid Enhancement Program
SFAB	Sport Fishing Advisory Board
S_{GEN}	Spawner abundance required to get to S_{MSY} in 1 generation
S_{MSY}	Spawners at Maximum Sustainable Yield
SN	Seine
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
TAM	Total Allowable Mortality
TR	Troll
WCVI	West Coast Vancouver Island
WSP	Wild Salmon Policy (Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon)

FOREWORD

The purpose of this Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) is to identify the main objectives and requirements for the Southern B.C. Pacific salmon fishery, as well as the management measures that will be used to achieve these objectives. This document also serves to communicate the basic information on the fishery and its management to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO, the Department) staff, legislated co-management boards, First Nations, harvesters, and other interested parties. This IFMP provides a common understanding of the basic “rules” for the sustainable management of the fisheries resource.

This IFMP is not a legally binding instrument that can form the basis of a legal challenge. The IFMP can be modified at any time and does not fetter the Minister’s discretionary powers set out in the *Fisheries Act*. The Minister can, for reasons of conservation or for any other valid reasons, modify any provision of the IFMP in accordance with the powers granted pursuant to the *Fisheries Act*.

Where DFO is responsible for implementing obligations under land claims agreements, the IFMP will be implemented in a manner consistent with these obligations. In the event that an IFMP is inconsistent with obligations under land claims agreements, the provisions of the land claims agreements will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

NEW FOR 2026-2027

KEY CHANGES FOR THE 2026-27 SOUTHERN BC SALMON IFMP

FOOD, SOCIAL, AND CEREMONIAL FISHERIES

DFO is working with the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) Nation to implement the BC Supreme Court's declaration of an Aboriginal right to fish for food in the south arm of the Fraser River. Fisheries in the Fraser River will be managed consistent with direction from the Court and harvest decision guidelines for First Nations FSC and Treaty domestic fisheries in this area as set out in the IFMP. Actual opportunities will be planned and announced in season.

RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Recent studies have suggested ways to increase the survival of released Chinook and Coho that include changes to fishing gear used in recreational fisheries. The Department is making gear changes to marine salmon fisheries. Gear changes are:

- prohibition of hooks having more than one point (i.e. single barbless hooks); and,
- prohibition of larger sized hooks (i.e. hooks with a hook gap no larger than 22 mm),

The Department also encourages increased education and awareness about handling practices to support increased survival of released salmon. More information can be found at: [Improving the survival of fish released in tidal waters | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada](#)

SALMON ALLOCATION POLICY

The Department is conducting a review of the 1999 Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon using a collaborative process involving First Nations, Commercial and recreational harvest groups. While review of the policy is ongoing, the Pacific salmon allocation priorities outlined in the 1999 Allocation Policy will continue to apply to the fishery management measures, strategies and associated fisheries identified in this IFMP. The five Nuuchahnulth Nations' aboriginal

rights to fish and sell fish will be managed consistent with the 2018 B.C. Supreme Court *Ahousaht* decision.

For further information on the Salmon Allocation Policy review, please visit: [Pacific Salmon Allocation Policy review](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

The 2025 Pacific salmon returns experienced varying environmental conditions across their freshwater and marine residences. Canadian Pacific salmon productivity (adult recruits produced per parental spawner) is expected to be mixed in 2025.

Summer river temperatures are increasingly exceeding upper thermal tolerances for salmon in assessed systems. In addition, early loss of snowpack can contribute to warmer summer river and lake temperatures.

B.C. experienced significant droughts in recent years. In summer 2021 and fall 2022, severe to extreme drought impacted multiple regions in B.C. In 2023, the entire province was impacted by extreme drought, except for the Northwest and Stikine basins. Lower water levels can increase water temperatures, reduce water quality, block passage to key spawning habitat, strand salmon, and increase their exposure to predators.

Large marine heatwaves were observed every year in the Northeast Pacific between 2019 and 2024. These included some of the largest marine heatwaves on record since observations began in 1982.

Looking further into the future, it is not anticipated that long-term salmon survival patterns will reflect what we have seen historically. Pacific salmon are responding to environmental changes driven by climate change and other human activities. Climate change vulnerability assessments can provide a longer-range outlook for Canadian Pacific salmon to better inform current and future management decisions, and support efforts to adapt to the changing salmon landscape (MacDonald and Grant 2023).

DFO has heard an increasing number of requests from First Nations and stakeholders to make adjustments to fisheries when extreme environmental conditions occur. DFO resource management will be using available resources to respond to extreme environmental conditions such as drought at a local level based on scientific advice that considers data quality and incorporates uncertainty. Since the environmental stressors encountered by individual salmon populations vary, so should the responses. Fisheries management responses may involve further reductions in fisheries for stocks impacted by these extreme events. Situations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by area staff, in collaboration with First Nations, with advice from Regional Salmon, DFO Science, and the Province of BC.

As part of its approach to drought response, DFO will continue to manage fisheries using a precautionary approach. Temporary fishery measures (i.e., time and area closures, variation in opening times, etc.) are anticipated to respond to potential extreme low flow and associated high temperature events. Additional management measures may also be considered to address specific challenges related to environmental conditions (e.g., work to restore access to spawning streams, management measures to protect holding fish, etc.).

FISH STOCKS PROVISIONS / REBUILDING PLANS

In April 2022, three stocks of Pacific Salmon were included in a regulatory amendment to the *Fishery (General) Regulations* (FGR) under the Fish Stocks Provisions (FSP). FSP includes obligations to maintain prescribed fish stocks at levels necessary to promote their sustainability (s. 6.1) and to develop and implement rebuilding plans for stocks that have declined to or below their limit reference point (LRP) (s. 6.2). The first three prescribed salmon stocks are Okanagan Chinook, West Coast Vancouver Island (WCVI) Chinook, and Interior Fraser River (IFR) Coho.

In addition to the first batch of stocks, the Department sought public comment from October 12 to November 11, 2024 on a proposal for a regulatory amendment to the FGR to prescribe the second batch of fish stocks that would be subject to FSP (sections 6.1–6.3 of the Fisheries Act). This regulatory amendment would see the addition of 65 fish stocks to Schedule IX of the FGR nationally, including five Pacific salmon stocks. Schedule IX currently contains 30 fish stocks.

Information on the proposed second batch of stocks can be found here: [Consultation on a Regulatory Proposal to Prescribe Stocks to the Fish Stocks Provisions in the Fisheries Act](#) (dfo-mpo.gc.ca) and are posted in [Canada Gazette I](#). This would add Early Stuart Sockeye, Barkley Sound Sockeye, Fraser River Pink Salmon, Stikine Sockeye, and Yukon Chinook to the list of prescribed stocks.

West Coast Vancouver Island Chinook Rebuilding Plan Updates:

The Rebuilding Plan for WCVI Chinook was approved by the Minister on March 11, 2025 and is posted on the DFO website in both official languages ([Fs144-87-2025-eng.pdf](#)). The Rebuilding plan was collaboratively developed with WCVI First Nations.

Okanagan Chinook Rebuilding Plan Updates:

The Rebuilding Plan for Okanagan Chinook is completed and now posted to the DFO website found here: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/ifmp-gmp/salmon-saumon/2024/okanagan-2024-eng.html>. The Rebuilding Plan was collaboratively developed with the Okanagan Nation Alliance.

INTERIOR FRASER RIVER COHO

For the 2026 season, the Department plans to allow a small incremental increase the exploitation rate from the current limit of 3-5% to a limit of 7%, with a commitment to reviewing outcomes post-season. This will permit an incremental increase in incidental impacts on IFR Coho in First Nation food, social and ceremonial fisheries, as well as, commercial (including First Nations economic) fisheries targeting Fraser River Sockeye. A post-season review of preliminary information from these changes will be considered making any longer term decisions about adjustments to the exploitation rate limit. This approach is consistent with Canadian conservation objectives and Pacific Salmon Treaty requirements, while maintaining other key existing IFR Coho management measures (e.g. window closures, selective fishing requirements).

For additional detail on management plan for 2026, please see Section 13.3.2

SOUTHERN BC AND FRASER RIVER CHINOOK

Conservation Measures

Management measures to address conservation concerns for wild Southern BC and Fraser Chinook continue to be required and will likely be maintained for many years to facilitate the rebuilding of at-risk Chinook stocks.

Precautionary fishery restrictions continue to be necessary to provide a high degree of protection to at-risk Fraser stream-type Chinook management units (Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂). This will require continued restrictions and/or closures to fisheries in times and areas where these stocks are encountered in Northern and Southern BC.

In 2026 changes to the Management measures from last year include:

- Implementing new recreational fishery gear restrictions (a prohibition on the use of treble hooks and requirement that hooks be barbless and a maximum size restriction) to improve the survival of Chinook salmon released in the recreational fishery;
- Reducing the maximum retention size for Chinook salmon from 80 cm to 75 cm for recreational fisheries in southwestern Vancouver Island marine waters (Juan De Fuca Management Areas 19-1, 19-3, 19-4, and 20-3 to 20-7) during the month of August;
- Allowing Incremental access for First Nations FSC fishing opportunities in the Fraser River;
- Implementing a start date of August 10 (6 days earlier than previous years) for commercial troll fisheries in Northern and Southern British Columbia;

An assessment of fishery mortalities is performed annually using information from coded-wire tags and genetic samples. This information may inform additional adjustments to management measures next year. The Department is also continuing to monitor the performance of Chinook indicator stocks to meet Pacific Salmon Treaty obligations and future adjustments may be required.

Mass Marking / Mark-Selective Fisheries

Since 2020 the Department has explored potential implementation of Chinook mass marking (MM) and mark-selective fisheries (MSF) as part of an integrated management approach. Work included the development of *An Implementation Framework for Mark-Selective Fisheries for Southern British Columbia Chinook Salmon* (draft MSF Framework). The Department is contemplating next steps for MSF and MM to support and any specific MSF plans will be consulted on.

FRASER RIVER SOCKEYE

For the 2026 forecast, final escapement plan, window closure dates, fishery guidelines and a proposed framework, please refer to the Fraser River Sockeye section of the Southern Sockeye Salmon Fishing Plan in Section 13.5.6.

COMMERCIAL SALMON ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK (CSAF)

*Please see [Appendix 4](#) for details of CSAF demonstration fisheries for 2026.

The Department is continuing to implement existing and review new CSAF demonstration fisheries proposals through the IFMP process. CSAF demonstration fishery proposals are intended to provide increased flexibility for harvesters to fish their commercial salmon shares. CSAF demonstration fishery proposals are assessed through an Evaluation Framework which outlines Departmental objectives and were developed with support from the Salmon Coordinating Committee (SCC) and Commercial Salmon Advisory Board (CSAB).

I OVERVIEW

I.1 INTRODUCTION

The Southern BC Salmon Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) covers the period July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

This IFMP provides a broad context to the management of the Pacific salmon fishery and the interrelationships of all fishing sectors involved in this fishery.

Section 2 considers stock assessment, while Sections 3 and 4 consider the shared stewardship arrangements and the social, cultural, and economic performance of the fishery. Section 5 describes the broader management issues. Sections 6, 7 and 8 describe allocation, general decision guidelines, and compliance plans. Sections 10, 11 and 12 are sections that describe the different fisheries. Section 13 covers off the fishing plans for each salmon species.

The Appendices in the IFMP provide information such as the fishing vessel safety and advisory board members.

I.2 HISTORY

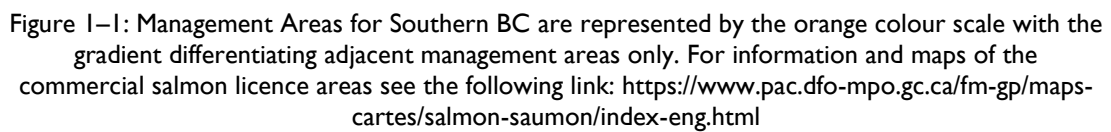
Fish and marine resources are central to the culture, society, and well-being of First Nations and provide a critical connection to language, traditional knowledge, and health of communities. For thousands of years, the history, economy, and culture of Canada's west coast have been inextricably linked to Pacific salmon. Since the late 1800s, salmon have supported a vibrant commercial fishing industry, vital to the establishment and well-being of many coastal communities. Salmon, particularly Chinook and Coho, also play a key role in the west coast recreational fishery.

I.3 TYPE OF FISHERY AND PARTICIPANTS

This plan describes the management of First Nations, recreational, and commercial fisheries for Pacific salmon in southern BC and the factors that influence decision-making. Salmon fisheries are coordinated regionally with many management decisions occurring in area and field offices. Key to salmon management is the development and implementation of integrated fisheries management plans that meet specified objectives focusing on conservation, allocation, and obligations to First Nations and international treaties.

I.4 LOCATION OF FISHERY

This IFMP covers fisheries in tidal and non-tidal waters from Cape Caution south to the BC/Washington border, including the Fraser River watershed.



1.5 FISHERY CHARACTERISTICS

Pacific salmon species covered in the plan include Sockeye, Coho, Pink, Chum, and Chinook. Fisheries include those undertaken by First Nations as well as the recreational and commercial sectors.

In the 1990 Sparrow decision, the Supreme Court of Canada found that where an Indigenous group has an Aboriginal right to fish for food, social, and ceremonial (FSC) purposes, it takes priority — after conservation — over other uses of the resource.

1.5.1 FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is committed to the recognition and implementation of Indigenous and treaty rights related to fisheries, oceans, aquatic habitat, and marine waterways in a manner consistent with section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDA), the UNDA Action Plan 2023-2028, and the federal Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples. DFO-CCG Reconciliation Strategy provides a guidance document to better understand why and how reconciliation informs the work of the Department.

Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms the existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Indigenous peoples in Canada. The Government of Canada's legal and policy frameworks identify a special obligation to provide First Nations the opportunity to harvest fish for food, social and ceremonial purposes. Treaty Agreements signed between Nations and the Government of Canada also obligate Canada to provide these opportunities.

There are four modern treaties in British Columbia, which all have fisheries chapters: Nisga'a Final Agreement, Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement, Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement, and the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjuxw'egəs). Through these modern treaties, Nations work with DFO to manage treaty fisheries on an annual basis. There are also historic treaties in British Columbia (Douglas Treaties and Treaty 8). For a detailed list of long-term fisheries arrangements in BC and Yukon, please see: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reconciliation/arrangements-ententes-eng.html>. For information on Tsawwassen First Nation, Maa-nulth First Nations and Tla'amin Nation fisheries please see Section 10.1.

Pre-season, DFO engages in a variety of consultation and collaborative harvest planning processes with First Nations at the community level, the multi-nation level, or watershed levels. Fisheries are then authorized via a Communal Licence issued by the Department under the Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences Regulations. These licences are typically issued to individual bands or multiple nations, and describe the details of authorized fisheries including

dates, times, methods, and locations of fishing. For modern treaty Nations, a Harvest Document is issued, which authorizes domestic harvest in accordance with their Final Agreement.

Licences, Harvest Documents, and Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) agreements (where applicable) include provisions that allow First Nations' designation of individuals to fish for the group and in some cases, vessels that will participate in fisheries.

Fishing techniques used in food, social, and ceremonial (FSC) and domestic fisheries are quite varied, ranging from traditional methods such as dip nets to commercial methods such as seine nets, fished from specialized vessels.

Separate from FSC fisheries, some First Nations have communal access to commercial opportunities as follows:

- Negotiated through a side agreement, some modern treaty First Nations have communal commercial access through a Harvest Agreement outside of the constitutionally protected treaty. More information is provided in Section 10.3.2.
- Commercial fisheries access through communal commercial licences obtained via a DFO voluntary licence relinquishment programs (e.g., Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI), or the Allocation Transfer Program (ATP). These communal commercial licences are fished in a manner that is comparable to the general commercial fishery.
- Negotiated economic opportunity fisheries (Lower Fraser and West Coast of Vancouver Island only) and demonstration fisheries (select locations, to date supported through commercial licence eligibilities relinquished from the commercial salmon fleet, through the ATP and PICFI programs).
- Community-Based Fisheries (CBFs), including Community Based Economic Fisheries (CEBFs), are collaboratively-managed (by DFO and First Nations) sale fisheries that may be established pursuant to reconciliation agreements, and are designed to enable enhanced community participation by supporting First Nations to fish existing commercial fishing access according to a set of negotiated flexibilities.
- Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirements (ESSR) fisheries may also be provided that permit the sale of fish in some highly terminal areas where spawner abundance is in excess of spawning requirements. Modern treaty Nations with provisions for access to surplus salmon under their Final Agreement, may be authorized to selective, terminal commercial sale fisheries where abundance permits.

- Right-based sale access for five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the West Coast of Vancouver Island (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht). DFO develops a seasonal Fishery Management Plan and can be found through this link: <https://science-catalogue.canada.ca/search~S1/?searchtype=X&searcharg=Pacific+region+Five+Nations+multi-species+fishery+management+plan&searchscope=1&SORT=DZ&extended=0&SUBMIT=Search&searchlimits=&searchorigarg=Xfive+nations+%26SORT%3DDZ>

FSC Fisheries

DFO remains committed to respecting First Nations' Aboriginal right to fish for FSC purposes, or domestic purposes under Treaty which has priority – after conservation – over other uses of the resource.

Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act recognizes and affirms the existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples in Canada. However, it does not specify the nature or content of the rights. In 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada issued a landmark ruling in the Sparrow decision, which found that the Musqueam First Nation has an Aboriginal right to fish for FSC purposes. The Supreme Court found that where an Aboriginal group has a right to fish for FSC purposes, it takes priority after conservation over other uses of the resource. The Supreme Court has also indicated the duty to consult with Aboriginal peoples when their fishing rights might be affected.

The Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) was implemented in 1992 to address several objectives related to First Nations and their access to the resource. These included:

- Improving relations with First Nations
- Providing a framework for the management of the First Nations fishery in a manner that was consistent with the Supreme Court of Canada's 1990 Sparrow decision
- Greater involvement of First Nations in the management of fisheries
- Increased participation in commercial fisheries (Allocation Transfer Program (ATP))

AFS continues to be one of the principal mechanisms – in addition to Treaties and reconciliation agreements - to support the development of relationships with First Nations, including the consultation, planning and implementation of fisheries, and the development of capacity to undertake fisheries management, stock assessment, enhancement and habitat protection programs.

Right-Based Fisheries

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island - Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have aboriginal rights to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined Fishing Territories and to sell that fish.

The 2023/24 *Five Nations Multi-species Fishery Management Plan* (FMP) outlined the fishing opportunities for the five Nations to exercise their rights to harvest and sell salmon, groundfish, crab, prawn, gooseneck barnacles, and sea cucumber. The FMP was extended to March 31, 2025 while the Government of Canada and the five Nations completed negotiations for an *Incremental Reconciliation Agreement for Fishery Resources* (IRAFR).

The IRAFR finalized in 2024 is a two-year agreement providing the framework for an effective and collaborative approach to governance, management and planning of the five Nations' fisheries resources. The agreement recognizes that the five Nations, through their respective ha'wiih (hereditary leadership) and elected leadership, have a role in the management of fisheries in their territories. In response to the Nations' interests, DFO and the five Nations authorized an extension of the Nations' fishing area from 9 nautical miles offshore to 69 nautical miles, effective July 17, 2024.

The IRAFR also provides funding to the five Nations for implementation, capacity building, and to acquire commercial fishing access. It sets out mechanisms for a Community-Based Economic Fishery plan, including shared goals and objectives to support the development of healthy, self-reliant and sustainable fisheries for the five Nations that will contribute to the local and Canadian economy.

The extended 2023/24 FMP is available here: <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/41253413.pdf>

Indigenous Community Based Fisheries

As outlined in the DFO-Coast Guard Reconciliation Strategy (<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/aboriginal-autochtones/reconciliation-eng.html>), the Department is committed to reconciliation with First Nations through strengthened Indigenous-Crown relationships, recognizing self-determination and reducing socio-economic gaps. In support of these objectives, DFO and several First Nations have finalized, or are negotiating, reconciliation agreements that include provisions for Community-Based Fisheries.

Community-Based Fisheries (CBFs), including Community Based Economic Fisheries (CBEFs), are collaboratively-managed (by DFO and First Nations) sale fisheries that are designed to enable enhanced community participation by supporting First Nations to fish existing commercial fishing access according to a set of negotiated flexibilities. CBFs will have a defined

area and will be characterized by fishery management flexibilities that are consistent with community objectives of enhanced participation and self-determination in fisheries, and will be designed and implemented to ensure conservation, sustainable use and orderly fishery management.

As provided for in the Fisheries Resources Reconciliation Agreement with the Coastal First Nations, the Council of Haida Nation is working with DFO to continue their CBF fishery in 2026 (For more information see the North Coast IFMP). Additional information is available here: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reconciliation/docs/frra-arrh-eng.html>

As part of the Maa-nulth Final Agreement and a side agreement negotiated between the Nations and Canada, DFO and the Maa-nulth Nations are continuing to work towards fisheries access for sale under the Incremental Community-based Economic Fishing Plan (ICEFP). Further details on the existing allocations, or a copy of the Incremental Community-based Economic Fishing Plan can be obtained by emailing: DFO.PacificSalmonRMT-EGRSaumondupacific.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

I.5.2 RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Fisheries and Oceans Canada regulates recreational fishing for Pacific salmon in both tidal and non-tidal waters. All recreational fishers must possess a valid sport fishing licence. Tidal licences are issued by DFO, and non-tidal licences are issued by the Province of BC. Anglers wishing to retain salmon taken from either tidal or non-tidal waters must have a valid salmon conservation stamp affixed to the licence. The proceeds from the sale of tidal Pacific Salmon Conservation stamps are used to fund salmon restoration projects supported by the non-profit Pacific Salmon Foundation. The proceeds from the sale of non-tidal Conservation Surcharge stamps directly benefit fish conservation through the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

Fishing techniques used in the recreational fishery include trolling, mooching, and casting with bait, lures, and artificial flies. Boats are most commonly used, but anglers also fish from piers, shores, or beaches. Only barbless hooks may be used when fishing for salmon in British Columbia.

I.5.3 COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Commercial salmon licences are issued for three gear types: troll, seine, and gill net. Trollers employ hooks and lines, which are suspended from large poles extending from the fishing vessel. Altering the type and arrangement of lures used on lines allows various species to be targeted. Seine nets are set from fishing boats with the assistance of a small skiff. Nets are set in a circle around schools of fish. The bottom edges of the net are then drawn together into a “purse” to prevent escape of the fish. Salmon gill nets are rectangular nets that hang in the

water and are set from either the stern or bow of the vessel. Fish swim headfirst into the net, entangling their gills in the mesh. Altering the mesh size and the way in which nets are suspended in the water allows nets to target certain sizes of fish. Gill-netters generally fish near coastal rivers and inlets.

Licence conditions and commercial fishing plans lay out allowable gear characteristics such as hook styles, mesh size, net dimensions, and the methods by which gear may be used.

1.6 GOVERNANCE

Departmental policy development related to the management of fisheries is guided by a range of considerations that include legislated mandates, judicial guidance, and international and domestic commitments that promote biodiversity and a precautionary, ecosystem-based approach to the management of marine resources. Policies were developed with consultation from those with an interest in salmon management. While the policies themselves are not subject to annual changes, implementation details are continually refined where appropriate.

1.6.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PACIFIC SALMON FISHERIES

Salmon management programs continue to be guided by the following policies: Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon (WSP), An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon, A Policy for Selective Fishing, A Framework for Improved Decision Making in the Pacific Salmon Fishery, and the national Fishery Monitoring Policy. These policies are available at:

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/policies-politiques-eng.htm>

Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon (the Wild Salmon Policy) sets out the vision regarding the importance and role of Pacific wild salmon as well as a strategy for their protection. More information on this can be found in Section 5.1.1 of this plan or at:

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/wsp-pss/index-eng.html>

The 1999 *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon* sets out principles for allocating salmon in BC among the three harvest groups (First Nations food, social and ceremonial; commercial; and recreational) and within the commercial fishery among gear types (gillnet, seine and troll). It forms the basis for general decision guidelines outlined in Section 7 of this plan.

Since the Salmon Allocation Policy (SAP) was first adopted in 1999, there have been significant changes to fisheries management, policy, and Indigenous rights. See Section 7.2.2 for more details on these changes.

The Department is currently undertaking a collaborative, phased process with First Nations and stakeholders to review and update the policy as a result of the 2018 BC Supreme Court *Ahousaht*

decision. The review is being conducted in a manner that is intended to respect Canada's nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous peoples and engage stakeholders. For more information on the SAP Review process, please visit our website: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/sap-prs/index-eng.html>.

Pacific Fisheries Reform, announced by the Department in April of 2005, provides a vision of a sustainable fishery where the full potential of the resource is realized, Aboriginal rights and title are respected, there is certainty and stability for all, and fishery participants share in the responsibility of management. Future treaties with First Nations are contemplated, as is the need to be adaptive and responsive to change. This policy direction provides a framework for addressing First Nations aspirations with respect to FSC, commercial access and involvement in management, as well as improving the economic viability of commercial fisheries.

In May 1999, the Department released *A Policy for Selective Fishing in Canada's Pacific Fisheries*. Under the Department's selective fishing initiative, harvester groups have experimented with a variety of methods to reduce the impact of fisheries on non-target species, with a number of measures reaching implementation in fisheries.

1.6.1.1 SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES FRAMEWORK

The Sustainable Fisheries Framework (SFF) is a toolbox of policies to ensure that Canadian fisheries support conservation and sustainable use of resources.

These policies include:

- *Fishery Decision-Making Framework Incorporating the Precautionary Approach*
 - Guidelines for Implementing the Fish Stocks Provisions in the *Fisheries Act*
 - Guidelines for writing rebuilding plans per the Fish Stocks Provisions and A Fishery-Decision-making Framework Incorporating the Precautionary Approach
- *Fishery Monitoring Policy*
 - Introduction to the procedural steps for implementing the Fishery Monitoring Policy
- *Policy for Managing the Impacts of Fishing on Sensitive Benthic Areas*
 - Ecological Risk Assessment Framework (ERAF) for Coldwater Corals and Sponge Dominated Communities
- *Policy on Managing Bycatch*
- *Policy on New Fisheries for Forage Species*
- *Canada's Policy for Conservation of Pacific Salmon (Wild Salmon Policy)*

For more information on the Sustainable Fisheries Framework and its policies, visit:

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/overview-cadre-eng.htm>

Sustainability Surveys for Fisheries: DFO annually tracks the performance of key fish stocks that it manages through the Sustainability Survey for Fisheries. Results of previous Sustainability Surveys are available at: [Sustainability survey for fisheries \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/overview-cadre-eng.htm)

Sustainable Fisheries Framework work plans: Each year, DFO develops a work plan and reports on priorities and targets regarding the sustainable management of Canada's marine resources. These work plans are available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/publications/work-plan-travail/index-eng.html>

1.6.1.2 PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH FRAMEWORK

The Sustainable Fisheries Framework policy suite includes a decision-making framework incorporating a precautionary approach to commercial, recreational, and food, social, and ceremonial fishing: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/precaution-eng.htm>

The precautionary approach in fisheries management requires caution when scientific knowledge is uncertain. The absence of adequate scientific information should not result in postponed action or failure to take action to avoid the risk of serious harm to the resource.

Applying the precautionary approach to fisheries management decisions entails establishing harvest strategies that:

- identify three stock status zones – Healthy, Cautious, and Critical – delineated by an upper stock reference point and a limit reference point;
- set the removal rate at which fish may be harvested within each stock status zone; and
- adjust the removal rate according to fish stock status (i.e. spawning stock biomass or another index/metric relevant to population productivity), based on pre-agreed decision rules.

The framework requires that a harvest strategy be incorporated into respective fisheries management plans to keep the removal rate moderate when the stock status is in the Healthy Zone, to promote rebuilding when stock status is low, and to ensure a low risk of serious or irreversible harm to the stock.

A key component of the *Precautionary Approach Framework* requires that when a stock has declined to the Critical Zone, a rebuilding plan must be in place with the aim of having a high probability of the stock growing out of the Critical Zone within a reasonable timeframe. For

more information on the Precautionary Approach see: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/precautionary-precaution-eng.htm>

1.6.1.3 FISHERIES ACT: FISH STOCK PROVISIONS

Amendments to the *Fisheries Act* (Bill C-68) were passed into legislation in 2019 and include new authorities to amend the *Fishery (General) Regulations* and requirements to maintain major fish stocks at sustainable levels, and to develop and implement rebuilding plans for stocks that have declined to their critical zone. Amendments are available at:

<https://www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/en/bill/42-1/C-68>

Associated regulatory amendments to prescribe major fish stocks and describe requirements for rebuilding plans are published in the Canada Gazette. Available at: <https://gazette.gc.ca/accueil-home-eng.html>. For latest publications, enter the search terms “fish stock” or “rebuilding plan” into the *Find a publication* box on that website.

Major fish stocks are defined in Schedule IX, and requirements for rebuilding plans are described in Part XIV (Fish Stocks Provisions) of the *Fishery (General) Regulations*. Available at: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-93-53/index.html>

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

DFO released the national *Fishery Monitoring Policy* in 2019, which replaces the regional *Strategic Framework for Fisheries Monitoring and Catch Reporting* in the Pacific Fisheries (2012). The national policy seeks to provide dependable, timely and accessible fishery information through application of a common set of steps used to establish fishery monitoring requirements across fisheries. Available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/fishery-monitoring-surveillance-des-peches-eng.htm>

From 2023 to 2028, Pacific Region is pursuing a project-based approach to implementation of the national *Fishery Monitoring Policy*, with a focus on the recreational fishery.

Further guidance on implementation of the national Fishery Monitoring policy is available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/fmp-implementation-psp-mise-en-oeuvre-eng.htm>

For more information on the 2012 Pacific *Strategic Framework for Fisheries Monitoring and Catch Reporting*, please visit: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/docs/framework-monitoring-cadre-surveillance-eng.html>

1.6.1.4 POLICY FOR MANAGING THE IMPACTS OF FISHING ON SENSITIVE BENTHIC AREAS

To avoid serious or irreversible harm to sensitive benthic habitat, species and communities and to otherwise address impacts to benthic habitat, communities and species, this policy outlines a five step process. Available at: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/benthi-eng.htm>

1.6.1.5 ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK & COLD-WATER CORAL AND SPONGE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The *Ecological Risk Assessment Framework for Coldwater Corals and Sponge Dominated Communities* (or ERAF) outlines a process for identifying the level of ecological risk of fishing activity and its impacts on sensitive benthic areas in the marine environment. Available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/risk-ecolo-risque-eng.htm>.

DFO's *Pacific Region Cold-water Coral and Sponge Conservation Strategy* aims to promote the conservation, health and integrity of Canada's Pacific Ocean cold-water coral and sponge species. For more information, visit: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/ceccsr-cerceef/conservation-eng.html>

1.6.1.6 POLICY ON MANAGING BYCATCH

The *Policy on Managing Bycatch* supports sustainable fisheries management by minimizing the risk of fisheries causing serious or irreversible harm to bycatch species, and by accounting for total catch, including retained and non-retained bycatch. Available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/bycatch-policy-prise-access-eng.htm>

The *Guidance on Implementation of the Policy on Managing Bycatch* supports policy implementation: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/bycatch-guide-prise-access-eng.htm>

1.6.1.7 POLICY ON NEW FISHERIES FOR FORAGE SPECIES

While other new fisheries may be started under the *New and Emerging Fisheries Policy*, this policy outlines the special considerations for new fisheries on forage species, which must not threaten the conservation of other species that depend on the forage species for food. Available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/forage-eng.htm>

1.6.1.8 WILD SALMON POLICY

Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon (WSP) guides Canada and its partners in protection and conservation actions for wild Pacific salmon species and their habitats. For more information visit: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/wsp-pss/index-eng.html>

1.6.1.9 GHOST GEAR PROGRAM

Abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG, or “ghost gear”) is a leading cause of marine plastic litter and a global issue. A recent study estimated that nearly 2% of all fishing gear becomes ghost gear (Richardson et al, 2022). Since fishing gear is designed to capture fish, this means that when gear is lost it has significant negative impacts on all marine animals and coastal and marine environments. An estimated 5 - 30% decline in some fish stocks is due to damage to important marine habitats from ghost gear (NOAA Marine Debris Program, 2015). This means that when marine animals are caught in ghost gear, it is a threat not just to marine mammals and species at risk, but also to the health of commercial fish stocks and aquatic habitats. Data from Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Lost Gear Reporting System between July 2020 and December 2023 shows that of the 85,610 animals identified in retrieved ghost gear in Canadian waters, 84% were of commercial value.

Canada has been at the forefront of addressing this issue, signing on to the Global Ghost Gear Initiative in 2018, establishing a Ghost Gear Program in 2019, mandating lost gear reporting in 2020, and sharing lost gear reporting data with the Global Ghost Gear Initiative's Data Portal in 2022 and again in 2024.

As part of the Canadian strategy on ghost gear going forward, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will perform a regulatory review and assessment process to address impediments to gear retrieval and to strengthen preventative measures. An area-by-area review of gear types to quantify risks to our ecosystems will also be performed as part of an analysis of fisheries management practices to help modernize, strengthen and implement best practices.

To learn more about the DFO Ghost Gear Program, go to: Canada.ca/ghostgear

1.6.1.9.1 Conditions of Licence to Report Lost and Retrieved Gear

All commercial harvesters must report their lost and subsequently retrieved fishing gear. While the Department is taking a stewardship approach to ghost gear and working with harvesters to reduce the effects of ghost fishing, the inclusion of the reporting requirement in conditions of licence means that not reporting lost and/or retrieved gear is now a chargeable offence.

Lost gear can be reported through the online Fishing Gear Reporting System, available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/commercial-commerciale/reporting-declaration-eng.html>

To learn more about the DFO Ghost Gear Fund, go to: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/management-gestion/ghostgear-equipementfantome/program-programme/projects-projets-eng.html>

I.7 CONSULTATION PROCESS

This plan considers the results of consultations and input from First Nations, recreational and commercial harvesters, and conservation organizations. Input was received directly through bilateral meetings and submissions to DFO on the proposed plan. Meetings with First Nations, Indigenous organizations and the Integrated Harvest Planning Committee (IHPC) provided opportunities for various parties to come together to discuss issues and concerns related to the management of salmon.

Any further significant changes to provisions in the IFMP will be identified to the parties prior to implementation, unless circumstances require changes to be made without prior notification, such as the case of in-season forecast updates.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is committed to working with First Nations on planning and management of the salmon fisheries through existing and emerging bilateral and regional processes and relationships, and to achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples by working towards renewed nation-to-nation relationships and partnerships that contribute to reconciliation, the recognition of rights and mutual understanding, trust and respect. Fisheries and Oceans Canada also continues to consult with recreational and commercial harvesters, and conservation organizations to seek input on the IFMP and to further plan and co-ordinate fishing activities.

Further information on salmon consultations, including IHPC terms of reference, membership, and meeting dates can be found on the Salmon Consultation website at: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/index-eng.html>.

I.8 APPROVAL PROCESS

This plan was approved by the Regional Director General – Pacific Region on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

2 STOCK ASSESSMENT, SCIENCE, AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

2.1 BIOLOGICAL SYNOPSIS

Pacific salmon managed by DFO include five species belonging to the genus *Oncorhynchus*: Pink (*O. gorbuscha*), Chum (*O. keta*), Sockeye (*O. nerka*), Coho (*O. kisutch*) and Chinook (*O. tshawytscha*). The native range of Pacific salmon includes the North Pacific Ocean, Bering Strait, south-western Beaufort Sea and surrounding fresh waters. They occur in an estimated 1,300 - 1,500 rivers and streams in BC and Yukon; notably, the Skeena River and Nass River in the north and the Fraser River in the south, collectively accounting for roughly 75% of the total salmon production in Canada.

Each Pacific salmon species has unique physical characteristics, life histories and spawning habits, with further variation observed among populations of each species.

Table 2-1 provides a brief summary of the contrasts in life history characteristics among species of Pacific salmon (from Haig-Brown Kingfisher Creek Restoration Project, 1998-99).

All five Pacific salmon species are harvested in First Nations fisheries in coastal and inland areas. Coho and Chinook are the preferred species in the BC coastal mixed-stock recreational fishery. Chinook are also caught in some commercial hook-and-line fisheries, and to a lesser extent, are caught by gill and seine nets. Sockeye, Pink and Chum are harvested primarily in First Nations and commercial net fisheries, but are also caught in recreational fisheries.

Table 2–1: Summary of general biological and life history characteristics for five species of Pacific salmon

Life History Characteristic	Coho <i>O. kisutch</i>	Sockeye <i>O. nerka</i>	Pink <i>O. gorbuscha</i>	Chum <i>O. keta</i>	Chinook <i>O. tsawytscha</i>
Season when eggs hatch	Spring	Spring	Spring	Spring	Spring
Length of stay in freshwater	1–2 years; 1 year is common.	1 month to 2 years	Virtually none; often straight to ocean.	Virtually none; often straight to ocean.	Ocean-type: 60-150 days Stream-type: 1-2 years
Primary rearing habitat	Stream	Lake/stream	Estuary	Estuary	Stream/Ocean
Size at ocean migration	10 cm or more	Variable, 6.5 to 12 cm	About 3.3 cm	2.8 to 5.5 cm	5 to 15 cm
Ocean voyage	4–18 months	16 months to 4 years	18 months	2 to 5 years	4 months to 5 years
Age at return to freshwater	During 2nd to 4th year	During 3rd to 5th years	During 2nd year	During 3rd to 5th years	During 2nd to 6th years
Season/month of return	Late summer to January	Mid-summer to late autumn	July to September	July to October	Spring to fall; some rivers support more than one run.
Number of eggs/female	2,000–3,000	2,000–4,500	1,200–2,000	2,000–3,000	2,000-17,000 (generally 5,000-6,000)
Preferred spawning area	Small streams	Near and in lake systems	Close to ocean	Above turbulent areas or upwellings	Very broad tolerances

For more information on species range and the salmon life cycle, refer to the Fisheries and Oceans Canada Pacific Salmon Facts website at <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/facts-infos-eng.html>.

2.2 ECOSYSTEM INTERACTIONS

As a consequence of their anadromous life history, salmon are sensitive to changes in both the marine and freshwater ecosystems. Salmon are an ecologically important species supporting complex food webs in oceanic, estuarine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems by providing nutrients every year during their migration to the rivers and lakes to spawn.

DFO is moving away from management on a single species and moving towards an integrated ecosystem approach to science and management. Strategy 3 of the [Wild Salmon Policy](#) (WSP), Inclusion of Ecosystem Values and Monitoring, states the Department's intent to progressively incorporate ecosystem values in salmon management. The main focus of this effort will be on developing ecosystem-related indicators and science-based tools to better understand the pressures on Conservation Units (CUs) of Pacific salmon and for integrating salmon conservation and other planning objectives. This strategy will include extraction of relevant information on environmental conditions in marine and freshwater ecosystems, in a risk-based framework.

The greatest challenge in implementation of the WSP is balancing the goals of maintaining and restoring healthy and diverse salmon populations and their habitats, with social and economic objectives that reflect people's values and preferences. Standardized monitoring and assessment of wild salmon populations, habitat and eventually ecosystem status will facilitate the development of comprehensive integrated strategic plans (WSP Strategy 4) that will address the goals of the WSP while addressing the needs of people. Outcomes of these plans will include biological objectives for salmon production from CUs and, where appropriate, anticipated timeframes for rebuilding and management plans for fisheries and watersheds, all of which will reflect open, transparent, and inclusive decision processes involving First Nations, communities, environmental organizations, fishers and governments.

For strategic planning and successful management of Pacific salmon, it will be essential to link variation in salmon production with changes in climate and their ecosystems. Salmon productivity in the Pacific is clearly sensitive to climate-related changes in stream, estuary and ocean conditions. Historically, warm periods in the coastal ocean have coincided with relatively low abundances of salmon, while cooler ocean periods have coincided with relatively high salmon numbers. In the past century, most Pacific salmon populations have fared best in periods having high precipitation, deep mountain snowpack, cool air and water temperatures, cool coastal ocean temperatures, and abundant north-to-south upwelling winds in spring and summer.

The Department conducts programs to monitor and study environmental conditions.

Information on these programs is available at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/index-eng.html>.

These programs include:

- I. The Strait of Georgia Ecosystem Research Initiative
- II. Fraser River Environmental Watch
- III. Monitoring of physical, biological, and chemical freshwater and marine conditions
- IV. Chlorophyll and phytoplankton timing and abundance

The annual State of the Pacific Ocean Report describes changes and trends in atmospheric and oceanic conditions that have the potential to affect Pacific salmon (and other species) populations and informs science-based decision-making and DFO's management of fisheries and marine resources in the Pacific Region. It is available at:

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/publications/index-eng.html>.

2.2.1 PACIFIC SALMON RETURNING IN 2026: AVERAGE TO BELOW AVERAGE SURVIVAL BASED ON SOME CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

B.L. MacDonald, N.L. Wilson, S.C.H. Grant, D.A. Patterson, K.A. Robinson, J.L. Boldt, C. Hannah, J. King, and A. Sastti

SUMMARY

We predict that Canadian Pacific salmon returns in 2026 will exhibit average to below average survival (adult recruits produced per parental spawner) depending on the population. Recent environmental conditions, particularly in fresh water, may have posed challenges for some 2026 returns. The effects of environmental conditions on salmon returning in 2026 will depend on the specific conditions encountered by each population, and their life-histories.

BACKGROUND

Pacific salmon are responding to environmental changes driven by climate change and other human activities¹. Physical changes in fresh water and marine environments affect Pacific salmon through their habitats and food availability, and salmon respond through their behaviour, growth rates, and overall survival². Like many parts of Canada, B.C. is experiencing warming at twice the rate of the global average³. Warming in Northern B.C. and the Yukon is three times the average in some areas⁴. As a result, environmental conditions are increasingly falling outside of their historical ranges. This makes salmon forecasts and outlooks increasingly

uncertain. Information on environmental conditions is therefore intended to be used to qualify the predictions of salmon returns in the salmon outlook. This outlook summarizes broad-scale patterns in fresh water and marine environments to provide an indication of overall survival conditions for Pacific salmon returning in 2026.

Pacific salmon vary in the habitats they occupy and the life history strategies they employ. Across the five species of Pacific salmon assessed and managed by DFO - sockeye, Chinook, coho, chum and pink - most of the 2026 returns would have been deposited as eggs in freshwater spawning grounds between 2021 and 2024 and hence will return at an age between two and five years old (Figure 2-1). The majority of sockeye and Chinook, and all coho, rear in fresh water for one to two years before migrating to the ocean. The remaining sockeye and Chinook, and all chum and pink, migrate to the ocean shortly after hatching and emergence, with a limited fresh water juvenile stage. Most 2026 Pacific salmon returns would have entered into the marine environment between 2023 and 2025, depending on the species and population.

Salmon that are returning in 2026 will have been exposed to varying fresh water and marine conditions between 2021 and 2026. The specific environmental conditions experienced by each population are determined by their spawning and juvenile rearing distributions, age of return, and other characteristics such as migration timing. While we do not have relevant data for all populations, we provide a general summary of what is known about environmental conditions experienced by the 2026 returns, in relation to historical conditions.

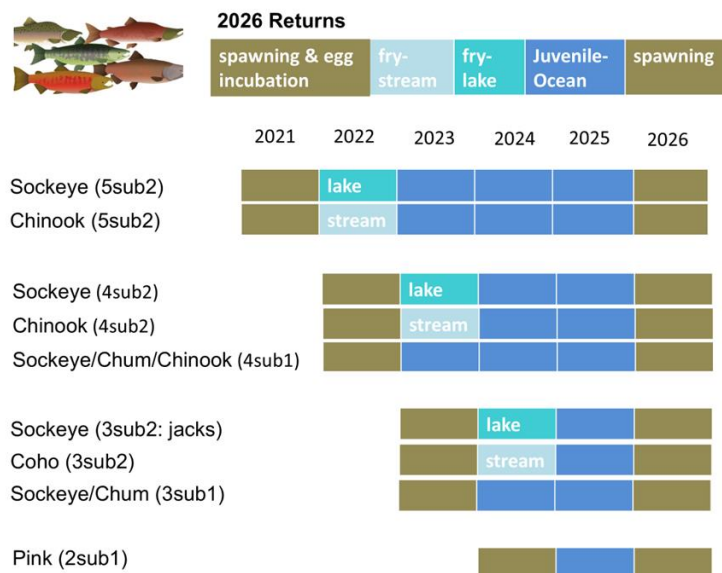


Figure 2-1: Timing of common age classes of Pacific salmon returning in 2026 in each habitat they occupy. For each species, the most common life-history types are presented using the Gilbert-Rich age designation system (in brackets): the number on the left indicates the total age at return, while the subscript shows the number of winters spent in fresh water prior to migrating to the ocean. Coloured boxes show the life stage and habitat occupied by each group in every year of their life, leading up to their return to fresh water to spawn in 2026.

RELEVANT FRESH WATER YEARS: 2021 THROUGH 2024

Air temperatures in the summers of 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 were some of the warmest on record in B.C.⁵⁻⁸. Air temperature is an important determinant of river temperature⁹, and therefore an important indicator of habitat stress that can impact salmon health in the fresh water stages of their lifecycle.

Snowpacks were variable across B.C. in 2021, though in some areas they were well below normal by late spring¹. Snowpacks were particularly low by early-June in 2023 due to early, very rapid snowmelt. In spring 2024, snowpacks were the lowest on record, and some low to mid-elevation areas were snow-free very early while high elevation melt was seasonal. Late-spring snowpack is an early-season indicator of river water volume, flow rates, and temperatures in the summer months¹⁰. Early loss of snowpack reduces the cool water inputs

¹ Normal monthly snowpack is the average snow water equivalent within each snow basin for the baseline period (1991-2020). Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development, River Forecast Center, Snow Conditions & Water Supply Bulletins <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/drought-flooding-dikes-dams/river-forecast-centre/snow-survey-water-supply-bulletin>

into rivers and lakes from snowmelt in warmer summer months, and reduces water volume, which makes water temperatures more sensitive to air temperatures.

Fraser River temperatures periodically exceeded the upper thermal optimum for salmon upstream migration during the summer migration periods in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024². Migration temperatures above 20°C can reduce egg viability, increase adult disease and mortality, and cause legacy effects on juvenile condition¹¹⁻¹⁴. High in-river spawning and incubation temperatures can have population-specific negative effects on fertilization success and embryo survival, affect timing of hatch¹⁵ and emergence¹⁶, and reduce swimming endurance and impair swimming behaviour of fry¹⁷.

Significant drought conditions were present in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024³. In summer 2021 and fall 2022, severe to extreme drought impacted multiple regions of B.C. Drought and associated low streamflow conditions that arose in fall 2022 persisted in many areas of the province through 2023 and 2024. In these two more recent years, most of the province (apart from the Northwest and Stikine basins) was impacted by significant drought, with the unprecedented 2023 drought conditions reaching severe levels for prolonged periods of time in most areas. Drought can result in lower river and lake levels, deteriorate water quality, block access to spawning habitat, strand salmon, increase exposure to predators and increase the risk of low oxygen levels in some freshwater systems.

Severe flooding in southwestern B.C. during November 2021 may have affected salmon eggs in some impacted systems. Flooding and high river flows can scour spawning beds or bury salmon eggs in sediment¹⁸⁻²³.

RELEVANT MARINE YEARS: 2023 THROUGH 2026 (WHERE AVAILABLE)

Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the Northeast Pacific Ocean (NEP) were near-average (1991-2020) in 2023 and 2024^{24,25}. SSTs in the NEP have increased by 0.22°C per decade since 1982 (C. Hannah, pers. comm, Dec. 22, 2025). However, trends vary spatially, with a large area in the center of the NEP increasing by 0.5°C per decade while coastal areas have warmed much less²⁶. SSTs along the coast of B.C. have warmed 0.09°C per decade on average, and have consistently been above the long-term average (1935-2024) for the past 12 years²⁷. Warming temperatures are an indicator of wider changes in the ocean, since they affect physical and chemical ocean processes as well as the condition and behaviours of marine species²⁷. For salmon, warmer

² Fisheries and Oceans Canada Fraser River Environmental Watch reports: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/reports-rapports/archives-eng.html>.

³ British Columbia Drought Information Portal: <https://droughtportal.gov.bc.ca/>

waters mean higher metabolic demands, which require an increase in prey quality or quantity to maintain growth²⁸. Predation also can intensify in warmer waters, increasing salmon mortality²⁹.

Large marine heatwaves were observed every year in the NEP between 2019 and 2025. These included some of the largest marine heatwaves on record since observations began in 1982³⁰.

At the time of writing, we are experiencing the 5th La Niña winter in 6 years. Historically, El Niño/La Niña phases dominated the variability in annual global temperatures, and La Niña's brought cool and sometimes wet conditions to the Northwest coast. Though La Niña still has a cooling effect on global temperatures, overarching warming means that during recent La Niña phases, global temperatures were warmer than during any of the recorded El Niño phases (which bring warmer conditions) prior to the mid-1990's³¹.

In 2023 and 2024, abundances of nutritionally-poor southern copepod species and comparatively nutritionally-rich boreal and subarctic species were all above average along the West Coast of Vancouver Island (WCVI) shelf³². This has not commonly been observed. Generally, abundances of southern vs. endemic (boreal and subarctic) zooplankton show an inverse relationship, with above average annual abundances of southern species and below average endemic species observed in warm years, and vice versa in cool years³³. Such variations in the zooplankton community are a key pathway potentially linking reduced salmon survival to warmer temperatures in the NEP³⁴. The drivers of the observed change in zooplankton community composition in 2023 and 2024 are currently not well understood; therefore the effects on salmon survival are uncertain (A. Sastri & P. Thompson, pers. comm. Jan. 5, 2026). In the NEP, warm water zooplankton have returned to average abundances (as of 2022) following a persistent increase during and after the 2014-2016 marine heatwaves³⁵.

The coastwide spawning biomass of Pacific herring has increased since 2010. However, trends vary across the five major herring stocks, with the Strait of Georgia and WCVI stocks making up the bulk of this abundance³⁶. These small fish are prey for adult Chinook and coho salmon.

Looking further into the future, as Pacific salmon respond to the coming environmental changes driven by climate change and other human activities, we do not anticipate that long-term salmon survival patterns will reflect what we have seen historically. Forward-looking, proactive adaptation to the changing salmon landscape is becoming increasingly urgent to reduce negative impacts and identify potential benefits of change. This requires identifying risks and adaptation opportunities across the social, economic and ecological systems that rely on salmon. Important tools that support this work include climate projections for salmon ecosystems, vulnerability assessments for salmon Conservation Units under climate change, and

frameworks like scenario planning to incorporate uncertainties into planning and decision-making.

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2.3 INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

The term Indigenous knowledge may not be universally used, and other terms such as Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Traditional Knowledge, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, or Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge, which all convey similar concepts, may be used instead.

In 2019, the *Fisheries Act* was amended to include provisions for the where the Minister may or shall consider provided Indigenous knowledge in making decisions pertaining to fisheries, fish and fish habitat. Section 61 of the act ensures this knowledge is protected and can only be provided with consent. There are also provisions under the *Species At Risk Act* (s.10.2, s.15.2, s.16, s.18.1) that support inclusion of Indigenous knowledge to inform the assessment and protection of species at risk. Likewise, the *Oceans Act* (s.42) allows the Minister to consider Indigenous knowledge in oceans related decisions.

The Government of Canada and the scientific community acknowledge the need to incorporate Indigenous knowledge in meaningful and respectful ways. Work is underway at a National level to develop processes for how DFO receives Indigenous knowledge and applies it to inform

decision making. Many outstanding questions remain on how to move forward in a way that respects, meaningfully incorporates, and protects the knowledge that may be shared with DFO, to mutual benefit. For example, how to engage knowledge holders, and how to ensure that the knowledge can be shared and considered in a mutually acceptable manner by both knowledge holders and the broader community of First Nations, stakeholders, managers, and policy makers involved in the fisheries. Given the diversity of knowledge and relationships, regional work will involve an iterative process in collaboration with First Nations, Indigenous groups and knowledge holders, to ensure appropriate inclusion and protection of the knowledge provided. The Department is committed to finding a way forward that respects the knowledge and the knowledge holders, and upholds the Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples, which are available online at:

<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/principles-principes.html>.

For more information on the updates to the *Fisheries Act*: <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/f-14/page-1.html> See Sections 2.5, 34.1, and 61.2 in the *Fisheries Act* (2019): <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/f-14/>.

Section 61.2 protections for Indigenous Knowledge have also been included in the *Access to Information Act*, Schedule 2: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/a-1/page-15.html#h-1230>

See the full *UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/u-2.2/>

See the full UN Declaration Act Action Plan (2023): [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan \(justice.gc.ca\)](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/u-2.2/)

2.4 STOCK ASSESSMENT

Salmon stock assessment provides sound scientific information to inform activities relating to the conservation and management of salmon resources. Stock assessment describes the past and present state of salmon stocks and forecasts of future states. Stock assessment programs contribute information to the fisheries management process, from the initial setting of objectives (and policies) to providing expert advice in the implementation of management plans. Stock assessment information also supports First Nations and Treaty obligations, integrated ocean management planning, development of marine protected areas, protection and recovery of species at risk, and international Treaty obligations and negotiations.

Historically, stock assessment has primarily focused on population dynamics of individual exploited stocks, as well as biological and population processes such as growth, reproduction, recruitment and mortality. As DFO moves to implementation of an ecosystem approach,

populations must be considered in a broader context and all activities impacting status, not just fishing, must be considered.

In the Pacific Region, salmon stock assessment advice is provided through the Salmon Assessment Section in conjunction with core Salmon Stock Assessment staff in the Stock Assessment and Research Division of Science Branch. External partners and clients play an increasing role in delivery of stock assessment activities. Some First Nations, recreational and commercial harvesters contribute directly through data collection and reporting. First Nations and community groups conduct field data collection projects. Universities and non-government organizations (NGOs) are active in analytical and peer review processes. Stock assessment staff collaborate with other regional, national and international organizations and conduct numerous cooperative and/or joint programs.

The Salmon Stock Assessment Framework is shaped by the WSP Strategy 1 which specifies requirements for standardized monitoring, status & management predicated on benchmarks. Strategy 1 identifies three elements:

- WSP Strategy 1 provides a standardized process for organizing Pacific salmon into Conservation Units (CUs), groups of wild salmon living in an area that are sufficiently isolated from other wild salmon such that the area is unlikely to be recolonized naturally in an acceptable period of time if they are extirpated. Scientists have grouped the greater than 9,600 Pacific salmon stocks into just over 450 discreet Conservation Units.
- DFO has developed criteria to assess CUs and identified a range of metrics for setting upper and lower CU benchmarks of status, dependent on data quality and availability (Holt et al. 2009; Holt et al. 2018). For each metric, lower and upper benchmarks will delimit three status zones of a CU. Management actions will be determined based on a CUs biological status relative to these benchmarks. Management will be focused on conservation measures for CUs in the red zone (i.e. below the lower benchmark), shift to cautionary management in the amber zone (between the lower and upper benchmark), and emphasizes sustainable use in the green zone (i.e., above the upper benchmark).
- A key requirement of the WSP is ongoing monitoring and assessment of the status of CUs. Monitoring wild salmon status in a cost-effective manner poses a challenge. It is not practical or cost effective to monitor all salmon demes. (A deme, as defined in the WSP, is a term for a local population of organisms of one species that actively interbreed with one another and share a distinct gene pool.) When groups of CUs are exposed to common threats, the approach will be to monitor a subset of these units. Annually, assessment monitoring plans are updated by the Salmon

Assessment Coordinating Committee (SACC) based on CU status determination and risks. The CU status will generally determine the frequency and intensity of the assessment effort. For example, when a CU falls within the Red Zone, ongoing annual assessment of its status including fishery and habitat impacts may be required. The SACC is developing a database that describes benchmarks, status, major risk factors, resource management objectives, and assessment requirements.

Assessment procedures will build on existing programs and local partnerships.

The vast number of stocks and the complex life cycle of salmon present substantial assessment and management challenges. Stock assessment activities are largely project-based and required on an ongoing basis because populations are dynamic and subject to shifts in productivity and abundance in response to environmental, biological, and human-induced factors. Responsible management requires continual updating of assessment information and advice. Scientists use a variety of techniques to generate estimates and forecasts of abundance (e.g., enumeration of juvenile “recruits”, females or adults on the spawning grounds, tagging and mark recapture studies, etc.). For most species, several methods may be used to generate the estimates and forecasts of abundance.

2.5 SCIENCE INFORMATION SOURCES

The Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS) serves as the primary departmental forum for peer review and evaluation of scientific research and literature relating to Pacific salmon. CSAS fosters national standards of excellence and coordinates the peer review of scientific assessments and advice for the DFO in the Pacific region. This review body allows for participation by outside experts, First Nations, fisheries stakeholders and the public. CSAS also coordinates communication of the results of the scientific review and advisory processes.

Additional information about CSAS, the peer review process and meeting schedule, reports on the status of salmon, environmental and ecosystem overviews prior to 2014, and existing research documents are available from CSAS web site:

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/index-eng.htm>

Annually, DFO provides a qualitative outlook of status for salmon management, the Salmon Outlook, for planning purposes prior to formal forecasts of abundance. The Salmon Outlook for the current year is available in [Appendix 8](#).

The number of salmon returning to spawn in a river, called “escapement”, has long been an important stock assessment measure of abundance. Salmon escapement data are now available from the Government of Canada Open Data portal at:

<http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/c48669a3-045b-400d-b730-48aafe8c5ee6>

2.6 PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH

Generally, science advice to fisheries management considers data quality and incorporates uncertainty (i.e., stock status forecasts presented as a statistical distribution rather than point estimate). WSP benchmarks of biological status will inform the development of a precautionary approach to management of salmon resources. Decisions on recovery and fisheries objectives will be made as part of the Strategic Planning Process described under WSP Strategy 4. Until benchmarks are determined for each CU, DFO must rely on indicators of status and existing species- and stock-specific constraints established for escapement goals and harvest rates by domestic and international (e.g., Pacific Salmon Treaty) processes. For more information on the Precautionary Approach see this link: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/precaution-eng.htm>

2.7 SHARED STEWARDSHIP

In the context of fisheries management, stewardship is often considered in terms of “shared stewardship,” whereby First Nations, fishery participants, and other interests are effectively involved in fisheries management decision-making processes at appropriate levels, contributing comprehensive knowledge and experience, and sharing in accountability for outcomes.

Moving toward shared stewardship is a strategic priority for DFO. This is reflected in a number of policies and initiatives, including the *Wild Salmon Policy* (WSP), the Resource Management Sustainable Fisheries Framework (SFF), Pacific Fisheries Reform, Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management (AAROM) Program, and the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS).

DFO is advancing shared stewardship by promoting collaboration, participatory decision-making, and shared responsibility and accountability with resource users and others. Essentially, shared stewardship means that those involved in fisheries management work cooperatively in inclusive, transparent, and stable processes, to achieve conservation and management goals.

2.8 RESEARCH

An overview of the science and research in the Pacific region is available on the regional website:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/index-eng.html>

3 STEWARDSHIP, CO-MANAGEMENT, CONSULTATION AND ADVISORY BOARDS

Stewardship refers to the care, supervision or management of something, especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.⁴

3.1 PACIFIC SALMON TREATY

In March 1985, the United States and Canada signed the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) to collaboratively manage, research, and enhance Pacific salmon stocks shared by both countries. The Treaty includes several fishing chapters within Annex IV, which outline conservation and harvest-sharing arrangements for migratory salmon. These chapters are crucial to the Treaty's function and are renegotiated about every 10 years. A bilateral Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC), made up of representatives from both nations, provides policy advice and recommendations. The Treaty also delegates specific salmon management tasks, such as the in-season management of Fraser River Sockeye and Pink salmon to a dedicated panel.

The U.S. and Canada also implemented a Coded-Wire Tag (CWT) program in 1985 to collect data essential for managing Chinook and Coho salmon stocks. The program helps assess the effectiveness of conservation efforts and fishing agreements. The most recent changes to the Pacific Salmon Treaty occurred in 2019, following a series of recommendations from the PSC. These amendments, which affect several chapters including those on Chinook, Coho, and Fraser River Sockeye salmon, introduced new conservation measures, harvest reductions, and adjustments to fisheries management to ensure the sustainability of salmon populations through 2028.

Key updates to the renewed chapters focus on specific salmon populations, with this round of negotiations taking a "whole-of-Treaty" approach. For example, Chapter 2 addresses the fisheries in Northern British Columbia and Southeast Alaska, introducing new management measures to protect Sockeye and Chinook salmon. Chapter 3 focuses on Chinook salmon, with reductions in harvest levels and enhanced monitoring and assessment programs. Chapter 4, which deals with Fraser River Sockeye and Pink salmon, provides more flexibility in managing

⁴ As defined in the Atlantic Fisheries Policy Review (AFPR):

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/afpr-rppa/framework-cadre-eng.htm#toc6>

stock-specific conservation goals and harvest objectives. Other chapters, like those for Coho and Chum salmon (Chapters 5 and 6), also feature updated management frameworks that aim to balance conservation efforts with the needs of the fishing industry.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) continues to engage with First Nations and stakeholders to address concerns and ensure that the Treaty's terms support both conservation and the fishing economy. The Treaty Chapters 1 through 6 expire December 31, 2028. In preparation for renegotiations, consultation and engagement is currently ongoing through 2026-27 with First Nations and stakeholders. As these discussions progress, Canada remains committed to long-term sustainability and responsibly managing shared fishery resources across borders.

For more information on the PST including revisions and updates to the provisions see this link: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/pst-tsp/index-eng.html>.

For current information on domestic management actions of a specific species/area/region see the "Decision Guidelines and Management Actions" section of the applicable yearly released IFMP.

3.2 SOUTH COAST AREA ROUND TABLES

Several salmon roundtables were created by First Nations, commercial fishers, and recreational fishers with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to promote a more streamlined, multi-interest, co-management process related to salmon harvest planning and management at a local level. Respecting the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans authority and consistent with DFO policies and the harvest guidelines in this IFMP, these local planning committees seek to provide consensus recommendations to DFO on decisions related to salmon harvest planning and management. The goal of these roundtables is to ensure fishing plans are coordinated and integrated. Harvest Roundtables are also connected to Stewardship Roundtables and local stewardship groups to address research, restoration, and enhancement in a comprehensive manner.

Existing roundtables are outlined further below. Other collaborative tables with First Nations, stakeholders, and DFO have also been developed in the South Coast Area, such as the Bute Inlet Round Table and the Quinsam/Campbell River Salmon Committee. The Bute Inlet Round Table was formed due to widespread concern for the impacts of the Southgate River landslide, and has participants from Homalco First Nation, DFO, the Province of BC, ENGO, and Industry. This group was working collaboratively to establish and implement short-term and long-term goals to support salmon and the recovery of the system. Homalco is making efforts to re-establish the Bute Inlet Round Table for 2026. The Quinsam/Campbell River Salmon Committee is a platform where the Wei Wai Kum and We Wai Kai Nations and DFO can partner to form recommendations for sustainable assessing, enhancing, and harvesting of Quinsam and

Campbell River salmon. Furthermore, in 2026 the Department is considering the development of roundtables, or similar collaborative processes, in Areas 14 and 15 pertaining to the harvest of terminal Chum Salmon and in Area 22 pertaining to the harvest of Nitinat Lake Chum.

Area 17 Nanaimo Harvest Roundtable

Area 17 Chum fisheries are managed through a collaborative process via the Nanaimo Harvest Roundtable. Members of the Roundtable include representatives from Snuneymuxw First Nation, Federal Government, local Sport Fishing Advisory Boards and representatives for each of the commercial salmon gear Harvest Committees. The Roundtable serves as both a plenary function and a decision-making function. This format allows for improved planning of local fisheries and better conflict resolution among harvesters. The Nanaimo Harvest Roundtable has developed an Area 17 Chum harvest plan that describes the basis of the management and assessment of the Area 17 Chum fisheries and harvest plans for each sector in marine and in-river fisheries. This plan is used to guide an in-season decision making process during which assessment results are reviewed and weekly harvest plans are determined.

Area 18 Cowichan Harvest Roundtable

Area 18 Chum fisheries are also managed through a collaborative process via the Cowichan Harvest Roundtable. Members of the Harvest Roundtable include representatives from Cowichan Tribes, Federal and Provincial Government, Provincial and local Sport Fishing Advisory Boards and representatives for each of the commercial salmon gear Harvest Committees. The Roundtable serves as both a plenary function and a decision-making function. This format allows for improved planning of local fisheries and better conflict resolution among harvesters. The Cowichan Harvest Roundtable is informed by Area 18 Chum harvest guidelines that describe the basis of the management and assessment of the Area 18 Chum fisheries and harvest plans for each sector in marine and in-river fisheries. These guidelines are used to inform in-season decision making processes during which stock assessment results are reviewed and weekly harvest plans are determined.

Area 23 Harvest Committee

Area 23 Sockeye fisheries are managed through a “co-management” process via the Area 23 Harvest Committee. The Area 23 Harvest Committee is a forum that includes representatives from the Tseshaht, Hupacasath and Maa-nulth First Nations, the Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council, the Area B and D Harvest Committees, local Sport Fishing Advisory Committees, local municipal governments, the provincial government, and DFO. The Area 23 Harvest Committee serves both a plenary function and a consensus decision-making function. This format allows for improved planning of local fisheries and better conflict resolution among harvesters.

The Area 23 Harvest Committee has developed a detailed Area 23 Sockeye Local Integrated Fisheries Management Plan that describes the basis of the management and assessment of the Area 23 Sockeye fisheries and harvest plans for each sector. This plan is used to guide an in-season decision making process during which assessment results are reviewed and weekly harvest plans are determined. The Area 23 Harvest Committee is currently developing a Somass Chinook local integrated fishery management plan that will define the escapement targets and harvest rates under various run sizes. The Decision Guidelines in this IFMP will be updated once the detailed local plan has been completed through the Area 23 Harvest Committee.

Area 25 Harvest Committee

The Area 25 Harvest Committee is a forum that includes representatives from the Ha'oom Fisheries Society, Ehattesaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Nuchatlaht First Nations, the Area D Harvest Committee, the local Sport Fishing Advisory Committee, the Nootka Sound Watershed Society, local municipal governments and DFO. The Area 25 Roundtable is developing a detailed local management plan for Chinook in Nootka Sound and Esperanza Inlet. The Decision Guidelines in this IFMP will be updated once the detailed local plan has been completed through the Area 25 Harvest Committee.

Area 26 Roundtable

The Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations (KCFN) are a Treaty First Nation and signatory to the Maa-nulth Treaty which came into effect in 2011. In 2014, KCFN spearheaded the establishment of the Area 26/126 Roundtable with the Area 26 lodges to develop a more collaborative approach to resource management.

Members of the Area 26/126 Roundtable include representatives from KCFN, lodges and recreational fishery interests, commercial fishery representatives and DFO. A larger table that includes Aquaculture, Forestry and other resource interests also exists for purposes beyond Fish and Fisheries management.

This Roundtable serves both a plenary function and a consensus-based decision-making function. This format allows for improved planning of local fisheries to support a number of mutual objectives including implementing the Maa-nulth Treaty's Fisheries Chapter, conservation, habitat restoration, fish stock rebuilding, and stock enhancement. The objectives of this Roundtable go far beyond fisheries and are built upon respect, community and relationship objectives that foster healthy marine and terrestrial ecosystems [ecosystem-based management (EBM)], local communities and increase sustainable and conservation based local participation in the fisheries for current and future generations.

The Area 26/126 Roundtable is developing detailed local management plans for fisheries through KCFN territories. The activities of the Roundtable include fisheries management and

collaborative catch monitoring initiatives and compliance programs that respect Treaty obligations and foster EBM principals.

The committee meets numerous times throughout the year including post-season, pre-season and in-season. Plans are reviewed annually and often in season. The Decision Guidelines in this IFMP will be updated once the A26/126 Plan has been completed through Area 26 Round Table/Harvest Committee.

3.3 SALMONID ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The Salmonid Enhancement Program (SEP) produces Pacific salmon at enhancement facilities, and undertakes projects that include public participation by local communities and First Nations in fisheries and watershed stewardship activities. Enhanced salmon enable economic, social and cultural harvest opportunities for commercial, recreational, and First Nations harvesters, support vulnerable stock rebuilding, and contribute to Canada's stock assessment commitments under the Pacific Salmon Treaty with the United States. Projects with community partners include stewardship activities and the development of integrated local and area watershed plans. SEP also supports school education and public awareness projects.

With respect to projects that undertake fish culture, about 170 projects release fish annually from sites throughout British Columbia and the Yukon. Projects range in size from spawning channels releasing nearly 100 million juveniles annually, to school classroom incubators releasing fewer than one hundred juveniles. SEP enhances Chinook, Coho, Chum, Pink, and Sockeye salmon, as well as small numbers of Steelhead and Cutthroat trout. Project types include hatcheries, fishways, spawning channels, lake fertilization, and small classroom incubators. Projects are operated by DFO staff or by First Nations and community and volunteer groups through partnership with SEP.

The hatchery component of the program is delivered through two components:

- Major Operations (OPS) SEP facilities that produce fish through hatcheries and spawning channels and are operated by DFO;
- The Community Involvement Program (CIP), which includes both Community Economic Development Program (CEDP) projects that operate under contribution agreements with SEP, and volunteer-run Public Involvement Program (PIP) projects. All are operated by First Nations or public/community groups in partnership with DFO and with technical support provided by SEP. The majority of PIPs are smaller projects that focus on outreach, stewardship and educational activities, and do not produce large numbers of fish.

All DFO operated and partnered enhancement facilities, and the fish produced at these facilities, are subject to the Pacific Aquaculture Regulations (PAR) under the Fisheries Act. The PAR licence conditions reference SEP's Regional Production Plan, which outlines production levels for these facilities - specifically the maximum numbers of eggs to be collected and juveniles to be released from each system. The Regional Production Plan also specifies release strategies that will produce the number of adults desired to meet specific objectives while considering species interactions, effects on existing stocks, harvest, habitat capacity, project capacity and overall salmon CU objectives. Production Plans are designed with the best available information on operational, biological, and fiscal conditions, and in most years the majority of planned programming is delivered. However, reference to salmon production within this Integrated Fisheries Management Plan is not a guarantee that all planned production will occur.

The following website contains links to summaries of the most recent years' production from DFO and DFO-partnered hatcheries, as well as the current version of the SEP Production Plan. . Note that from February to June each year the Production Plan is in draft form and is subject to change. From June to the following February, the Final Production Plan is available.

[IFMP SEP Data Tables | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ifmp-sep/DataTables/PacificRegion/FisheriesandOceansCanada/dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

Significant production adjustments for the current year are identified in the Species Overview section of the Section 13 Fishing Plans under *Enhancement Information*. Overall, the Salmonid Enhancement Program continues work to modernize hatchery management and align production to meet departmental directives. This includes adjusting programming to support increased conservation efforts and harvest transformation initiatives.

3.3.1 HARVEST & HATCHERY PRODUCTION CONTROL PRINCIPLES

Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative (PSSI) has invested in hatchery modernization, including the development of a Strategy to innovate and adapt the Department's operational planning for salmon enhancement by developing tools and processes that enable a more adaptive approach. Action 2 of the Strategy is to "Align harvest production from hatcheries and spawning channels with fishery planning". One of the two Action Steps linked to this Action is to "Develop and publish harvest production control principles".

Given the annual planning needs for fisheries management, and the longer-term planning for hatchery production, over time there is the possibility for incongruencies to develop. The intent of this work is to establish a shared planning framework that improves alignment between harvest planning and hatchery production over time. The commitments outlined below describe the continued long-term direction and planning vision, recognizing that

implementation will be incremental, iterative, and dependent on regional circumstances, available information, and evolving fishery objectives.

The following principles have been identified by Fisheries Management (FM) and the Salmon Enhancement Program (SEP) to improve alignment between harvest objectives and hatchery production

Principles:

- Hatchery production for harvest will occur where harvest goals and specific fisheries are clearly articulated and there is a planned fishery.
- All harvest production levels will be linked to specific harvest goals.
- Performance indicator metrics and decision guidelines for contributions to different types of harvest will be developed.
- The work to ensure alignment between harvest and production commitments will be developed through existing planning processes and will be clearly documented.

3.4 CANADA AND FIRST NATIONS COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE

Fish and marine resources are central to the culture, society, and well-being of First Nations and provide a critical connection to language, traditional knowledge, economies and health of communities. Many Indigenous communities are located adjacent to key fishing sites, oceans and aquatic resources, and consider the management of these resources to be important to their communities. DFO has heard through engagement that Indigenous groups are seeking to pursue a variety of broad interests, such as greater access to economic opportunities from aquatic resources as a potential driver for economic development, more stability in FSC and treaty domestic fisheries, a greater role in aquatic resource and oceans management decisions, and a greater role in stewardship, including stock assessment, oceans and habitat management, conservation and protection, and recovery strategy development and implementation. The interests of individual communities are further sought based on specific, localized needs and interests.

DFO recognizes that the following section does not necessarily reflect Indigenous perspectives on the social and cultural importance of salmon fisheries to First Nations, and is considering how Indigenous perspectives may be better reflected in future IFMPs.

3.4.1 COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

DFO is committed to the recognition and implementation of Indigenous and treaty rights related to fisheries, oceans, aquatic habitat, and marine waterways in a manner consistent with section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous*

Peoples (UNDRIP), the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA), the UNDA Action Plan 2023-2028, and the federal Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples. DFO-CCG Reconciliation Strategy provides a guidance document to better understand why and how reconciliation informs the work of the Department.

DFO recognizes the right of Indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making in matters that affect their rights through their own representative institutions and the need to consult and cooperate in good faith with the aim of securing their free, prior, and informed consent.

Canada is guided by the [Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples \(justice.gc.ca\)](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/principles-principes.html) in the consultation and engagement it does with Indigenous peoples. Consultation and engagement with First Nations takes place at a number of levels and through a variety of processes. A significant amount of consultation and dialogue takes place through direct, bilateral meetings between DFO and First Nations at a local level. This can include specific engagement on the draft IFMP or other issues throughout the year. For Treaty Nations, consistent with the Cabinet Directive on the Federal Approach to Modern Treaty Implementation, DFO consults on a broad suite of fish and fishery related items, including shared stewardship arrangements, through formal processes such as Joint Fisheries Committees or Joint Fisheries Management Committees. In addition to consultations at the local level, DFO works with First Nations at the aggregate or watershed level. For information on the Fraser Salmon Management Council, see Section 10.1.3.

For further information on Canada's reconciliation commitments:

<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/u-2.2/https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/principles-principes.html>

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/aboriginal-autochtones/reconciliation-eng.html>

- Implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/index.html>
- The UNDA Action Plan 2023-2028: <https://justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/ap-pa/index.html>
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Canadian Coast Guard Reconciliation strategy: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/aboriginal-autochtones/reconciliation-eng.html>
- Reconciliation, partnerships and Indigenous fisheries in British Columbia and Yukon: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reconciliation/reconciliation-pacific-pacifique-eng.html>
- Information on the Government of Canada's work to advance reconciliation: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1400782178444/1529183710887>

- Canada's Collaborative Modern Treaty Implementation Policy: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1672771319009/1672771475448>

3.4.2 CANADA AND FIRST NATION TREATIES AND RECONCILIATION AGREEMENTS

Collaborative governance between the Government of Canada and Indigenous Peoples can be achieved several ways. Modern treaties provide the structural parameters by which the parties (the First Nation(s), Canada, and the Province) can develop a collaborative governance process. Under each Final Agreement, a Joint Fisheries Committee (JFC) is appointed to provide guidance, make recommendations, and delegate subcommittees or technical committees to review technical and operational fisheries information to support collaborative governance and treaty implementation. The JFC can also examine ways to build upon and improve the relationships and collaboration among the parties. Further information on treaties can be found under Section 10.1.1.

In addition to negotiating treaties, the Government of Canada and Indigenous peoples can also negotiate reconciliation agreements, to explore new ways of working together to advance the recognition of Indigenous rights and self-determination. These agreements are led by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). DFO can also negotiate Fisheries Resources Reconciliation Agreements directly with First Nations to enhance collaborative governance between First Nations and DFO on management of fisheries, marine and aquatic matters. Further information on Reconciliation Agreements can be found in Section 10.1.1.2.

3.4.3 FRASER SALMON COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

The Fraser Salmon Collaborative Management Agreement (FSCMA; Agreement) was signed in July 2019 by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the Fraser Salmon Management Council (FSMC) (the Parties). The Agreement is the culmination of decades of foundational work and sets out a collaborative governance structure between the Parties to support the collaborative management of Fraser River salmon (Figure 3–1).

The FSMC is a mandated organization that includes 81 signatory First Nations from the Fraser watershed and marine approach areas with access to Fraser salmon. Through the FSCMA, a joint table called the Fraser Salmon Management Board (FSMB) was established to support government – to – government consensus decisions and recommendations to the Parties on the Collaborative Governance and Management and conservation of Fraser Salmon at the Migratory Route Scale. Through implementation of this agreement, it recognizes and affirms Section 35(1) FSC fishing rights and that those rights have top priority after conservation. While the Agreement provides a structure for discussions between the Parties regarding Fraser River

salmon, it does not replace or alter DFO's obligations and commitments with respect to bilateral consultation (particularly with First Nations non-signatory to the Agreement), nor does it affect Aboriginal or Treaty rights of any Indigenous peoples.

Since the Agreement was signed in 2019, the Parties have been working to populate positions within the governance structures identified in the Agreement, to develop a work plan and undertake the work identified within their annual workplans. Work is currently underway to develop the annual work plan for 2025-2026. While the Board may consider fisheries management measures related to all fisheries with directed or induced mortality on Fraser salmon stocks, there has been significant focus on the management of Fraser Summer 5₂ Chinook and recommendations on Fraser Sockeye Escapement Plans in multiple seasons. The full scope of the annual FSMB workplan can be found at: <https://frasersalmon.org/collaborative-management-agreement/>

More information on the FSCMA can be found at: <https://frasersalmon.ca/>

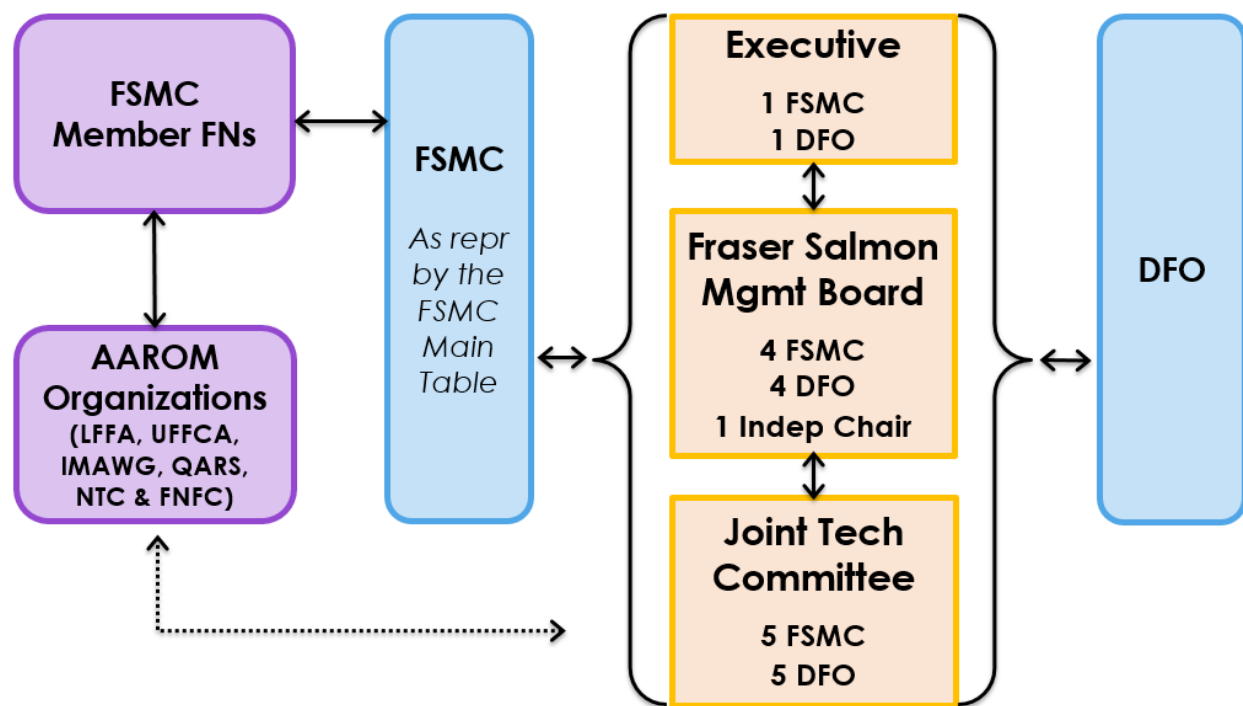


Figure 3–1: Governance structures established within the Fraser Salmon Collaborative Management Agreement (FSCMA).

3.5 ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

3.5.1 SALMON COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The First Nations Fisheries Council Salmon Coordinating Committee (SCC) facilitates dialogue between First Nations and DFO. First Nations representatives from 13 geographical areas

within the Pacific Region meet with DFO resource management to discuss priority issues among BC First Nations as they relate to salmon. SCC priorities include advancing Indigenous fisheries; building First Nations capacity and fisheries governance; advising on salmon conservation and rebuilding; and the sustainability of Pacific salmon fisheries concerns.

3.5.2 INTEGRATED HARVEST PLANNING COMMITTEE

At a broad, Province-wide level, the Integrated Harvest Planning Committee (IHPC) was developed to bring together First Nations, commercial, and recreational harvesters, and environmental interests to review and provide input on the IFMP, as well as coordinate fishing plans and (where possible) resolve potential issues among the sectors. The IHPC also meets post-season to review information regarding stocks and fisheries and implementation of the IFMP. The current IHPC advisory membership list is located in [Appendix 3](#).

In addition to integrated dialogue through the IHPC, the Department also works directly with the commercial and recreational sectors, largely through the Commercial Salmon Advisory Board (CSAB) and Sport Fishing Advisory Board (SFAB), respectively. The Department also consults with the Pacific Marine Conservation Caucus, an umbrella group representing nine core environment groups (<http://www.mccpacific.org/>).

3.5.3 COMMERCIAL SALMON ADVISORY BOARD

The Commercial Salmon Advisory Board (CSAB) consists of two representatives from each Area Harvest Committee (Area A-H), as well as representatives from the Native Brotherhood of BC (2), the processing sector (2), and the UFAWU (2). The CSAB serves as the consultative body on issues that affect commercial salmon fisheries. Two representatives from each area are nominated to sit on the DFO Integrated Harvest Planning Committee. The current CSAB members list is available at: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/csab-ccpcs/membs-eng.html>

3.5.4 AREA HARVEST COMMITTEES

Area Harvest Committees (AHC) consist of representatives nominated and elected by salmon licence eligibility holders. Elections are normally held every year where half of the board will be up for re-election. AHCs provide pre-season and in-season advice and recommendations on fishing related matters to DFO as appropriate to the area and gear type. Two representatives from the AHC are elected to represent the interests of the specific area and gear type on the CSAB. The AHC members list is available at: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/csab-ccpcs/ahc-ces-membs-eng.html>

3.5.5 SPORT FISHING ADVISORY BOARD

The Sport Fishing Advisory Board has been an advisory body to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) on recreational issues since 1964. The Board's role is to provide advice and make recommendations to DFO on matters affecting tidal waters fisheries and non-tidal anadromous fisheries and in tidal waters on matters affecting all species and forms of recreational fishing. A terms of reference for this board is available at:

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/sfab-ccps/index-eng.html>

4 ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL IMPORTANCE

Portions of Section 4 and 4.1 have been prepared by the Salmon Coordinating Committee (SCC) which represents approximately 14 delegates from First Nations Fisheries Council regions. The Salmon Coordinating Committee submitted this revised version of Section 4 and 4.1 to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) as part of the development of the IFMP, to more accurately convey their perspectives on First Nation fisheries, food, social & ceremonial fisheries, and First Nations sale fisheries. The language documented in this section is expected to continue to evolve and be revised in the coming years. The views and statements expressed in this section are those of the First Nations Fisheries Council and the Salmon Coordinating Committee. Inclusion of this language in the IFMP does not indicate that DFO endorses or accepts any of the statements, claims or conclusions expressed. The summary is included here to document and share in their own words the perspective of the First Nations represented by the Salmon Coordinating Committee.

The intent of this section is to provide a legal and socio-economic overview of the salmon fisheries in British Columbia using available information. This summary addresses salmon in the context of the Indigenous food, social, and ceremonial fishery, including the treaty domestic fishery, the five Nations' rights based sale fishery, the recreational fishery, and commercial fishery (harvest, processing and export activity including that generated by the Indigenous communal commercial fishery). This section does not provide measures of economic value (i.e. consumer and producer surplus), rather it focuses on activity. DFO recognizes the unique values of each of the fisheries described here. The overview provided in this profile is intended to help build a common understanding of the socio-economic dimensions of each fishery rather than compare the fisheries. Where possible this summary highlights information specific to the South Coast.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada acknowledges the need to improve how socioeconomic assessments are conducted and integrated into fisheries management decisions. In particular, the Salmon Coordinating Committee seeks DFO support to continue to expand collaborative efforts with First Nations in this area. The focus should be to reinforce structured decision-making frameworks that strengthen triggers, thresholds, and accountability mechanisms to safeguard First Nations' rights and access to FSC fisheries, while improving the implementation of existing measures. Upon the adoption of alternative measures of the value of salmon fisheries to First Nations, socioeconomic is not an appropriate metric to use when comparing First Nations fisheries and recreational or commercial fisheries, nor more broadly as a justification to resist stricter conservation measures that are essential for the sustainability of salmon stocks.

4.1 INDIGENOUS FISHERIES

Salmon fisheries are inseparable from the cultural, social, health, educational, and economic well-being of First Nations communities throughout British Columbia. Fisheries and Oceans Canada recognizes the inherent and constitutionally protected rights of Indigenous peoples to access and manage fisheries resources. First Nations fisheries are vital to the sustenance, cultural identity, and social cohesion of First Nations communities. The significance of salmon extends beyond economic valuation, as it is fundamental to the well-being, persistence, and traditions of Indigenous peoples. To ensure the long-term sustainability of FSC fisheries, conservation measures must prioritize the availability of salmon for both current and future generations. The current socioeconomic evaluation of salmon fisheries for First Nations is an insufficient measure. It does not account for the role that barter and trade and gifting practices take, the impact that access to traditional foods have on the food security and physical health of Indigenous people, or the importance of the act of fishing to First Nations identity. In 2007, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly. While Canada initially voted against UNDRIP at the UN, it ratified the Declaration as law in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDA) became law 2021. Under this Act, the Government of Canada is committed to working in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples. Fisheries and Oceans Canada's objectives in ensuring federal laws are consistent with the UN Declaration are outlined through 11 action plan measures (APMs) in The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan, 10 of which are directly applicable to First Nations. These 10 APMs can be found on page 35 under Lands, territories and resources and page 74 under Indigenous Modern Treaty partner priorities.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada recognizes that the following section does not reflect Indigenous perspectives on the economic, social, cultural, educational and health importance of salmon fisheries and their management to First Nations, and is considering how Indigenous perspectives may be better reflected in future Integrated Fisheries Management Plans for salmon. In the interim, further information on the importance of salmon to Indigenous communities can be found in a *Special Report to the Pacific Salmon Commission: The Sociocultural Significance of Pacific Salmon to Tribes and First Nations* (<https://www.psc.org/news-announcements/sociocultural-significance-of-salmon-to-tribes-and-first-nations/>).

4.1.1 FOOD, SOCIAL AND CEREMONIAL FISHERIES

Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, recognizes and affirms the existing Indigenous and Treaty rights of the Indigenous Peoples in Canada. In 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada issued a landmark ruling in the Sparrow decision. This decision found that the Musqueam First Nation

has an Indigenous right to fish for food, social and ceremonial (FSC) purposes. The Supreme Court found that where an Indigenous group has a right to fish for FSC purposes, it takes priority, after conservation, over other uses of the resource, namely commercial and recreational fisheries. The Supreme Court has also indicated the duty to consult with Indigenous Peoples when their fishing rights might be affected, a duty which has been reaffirmed on multiple occasions, such as through *Delgamuukw v British Columbia* (1997) and *Haida Nation v British Columbia* (2004), which both strengthen this duty, as well as outline it to be performed before an action that may impact the rights of Indigenous peoples. In response to the Sparrow decision, the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) was implemented in 1992 to address several objectives related to First Nations and their access to the resource. These included:

- To provide a framework for the management of fishing by Indigenous groups for food, social and ceremonial purposes.
- To provide Indigenous groups with opportunities and increased capacity to participate in the management of fisheries, thereby improving conservation, management and enhancement of the resource.
- To contribute to the economic self-sufficiency of Indigenous communities.
- To provide a foundation for the development of self-government agreements and treaties.

In the region in 2025-2026, there were approximately 95 AFS agreements. AFS fisheries agreements may identify the amounts of species including salmon that may be fished for FSC purposes, terms and conditions that will be included in the communal fishing licence and fisheries management arrangements. AFS continues to be one of the principal mechanisms – in addition to Treaties and reconciliation agreements - to support the development of relationships with First Nations including the consultation, planning and implementation of fisheries, and the development of capacity to undertake fisheries management, stock assessment, enhancement and habitat protection programs. Additional information on AFS implementation for FSC, including harvest target amounts for South Coast are provided in Section 10.1.3.

There are four modern treaties in British Columbia, which all have fisheries chapters: Nisga’a Final Agreement, Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement, Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement, and the Tla’amin Treaty (ʔaʔjuxʷegəs). Further information can be found in Section 1.5. For information on Tsawwassen First Nation, Maa-nulth First Nations and Tla’amin Nation fisheries please also see Section 10.1. Fisheries chapters in modern treaties may articulate treaty fishing rights for domestic purposes that are protected under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982.

In addition to modern-day treaties, there are historic treaties in British Columbia: [Douglas Treaties](#) (1850-1852) and [Treaty 8](#) (1899). AAROM departments are Indigenous-led

organizations providing Western and Indigenous scientific and technical services in areas such as: fisheries, aquatic resources, ocean science, aquaculture, habitat monitoring and restoration, geo-mapping, forestry, climate change monitoring and adaptation and land management. AAROM departments are usually formed around a watershed, and are staffed by biologists, field technicians, and other experts who conduct research, assessments and field work to assist member communities and partners. Through Indigenous-led collaborative management forums, AAROM departments exchange information about their fisheries and resource management activities. Furthermore, they provide educational opportunities and outreach programming to Indigenous youth and communities in order to increase Indigenous knowledge but also create careers for Indigenous people within a wide range of environmental sciences and management fields. AAROM departments are independent Indigenous organizations who receive support through the Aboriginal Aquatic Resources Oceans Management (AAROM) program from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The work is performed to represent the needs and interests of member nations. There are 15 AAROM departments in British Columbia: A-Tlegay Fisheries Society, Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance, Fraser Salmon Management Council, Island Marine Aquatic Working Group Society, Ktunaxa Nation Council, Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance, North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, Okanagan Nation Alliance, Q'ul-Ihanumutsun Aquatic Resources Society, Council of the Haida Nation, Secwepemc Fisheries Commission, Skeena Fisheries Commission, Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance, and First Nations Fisheries Council of British Columbia. While AFS focuses on Indigenous participation in fisheries and resource access, AAROM helps Indigenous communities build capacity to manage fisheries and aquatic ecosystems effectively.

4.1.2 INDIGENOUS SALE FISHERIES

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island – Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined fishing territories and to sell that fish. For further information please see Section 10.3.1.

In the South Coast, Tsawwassen and Maa-nulth First Nations Treaties came into effect on April 3, 2009 and April 1, 2011, respectively. Most recently, the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjux^wegəs) came into effect on April 5, 2016. For additional information please see section 10.1.1. Negotiated through a side agreement, some modern treaty First Nations have been provided commercial access either through the general commercial fishery or a Harvest Agreement.

Under specific treaty provisions, communal sale fisheries may also be negotiated through side agreements between DFO and modern treaty First Nations. Modern treaty Nations each

develop their own unique strategic sale fisheries objectives. Feedback provided to-date is not exhaustive or complete, but suggests some First Nations' economic priorities may include:

1. New and continued commercial licence acquisition and access to fisheries (including terminal fisheries).
2. Fulsome opportunities for community members to participate in activities in support of commercial fishing opportunities including employment, contracting, training, and education.
3. Opportunities for employment and contracts to conduct scientific monitoring, enforcement, and compliance activities.

In terms of Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities, the Department's general approach is that Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities are managed using the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery. Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities may be implemented with different times, areas, gears and regulations consistent with the overall management approach for the commercial fishery. The landings and value attributable to Indigenous commercial harvest are included in the values reported for the commercial sector above and this includes inland fisheries.

Participation in the commercial salmon fishery provides not only socioeconomic benefits for Indigenous communities through fishery revenues and employment-generated income but also a significant opportunity to engage in fishing, an activity of deep cultural, spiritual, and historical importance. Before colonization, wealth for First Nations was demonstrated through practices such as sharing, gifting, and trading, with salmon playing a central role. These practices were integral to sustaining strong social bonds, community well-being, and collective prosperity. Even in the context of commercial sale, the significance of salmon remains unchanged. Engaging in the commercial fishery presents First Nations with an opportunity to gain greater control over their resources, asserting their rights in the face of historical marginalization. The ownership, stewardship, and sustainable management of natural resources, including salmon, formed the foundation of the pre-colonization coastal economy in British Columbia. In the modern Canadian context, the benefits of participation in commercial fisheries are primarily economic, but for First Nations, these benefits extend far beyond the economic realm, and the prioritization of these benefits should be determined in consultation with First Nations to ensure they align with their values and needs. The commercial salmon fishery serves as a key intersection of cultural preservation, economic opportunity, and environmental stewardship for Indigenous peoples in British Columbia. It enables communities to continue practicing fishing as a cultural tradition while securing livelihoods. Through this multifaceted engagement with the fishery, First Nations reaffirm their enduring connection to

the land, water, and resources, asserting their role in managing and benefiting from their ancestral territories.

Indigenous participation within the Indigenous commercial salmon fishery occurs under two licence categories (A and FA). Within the category A licence eligibilities, there are full fee and reduced fee licence eligibilities. Reduced fee licence eligibilities may only be held on a vessel that is owned by an Indigenous individual and where the Indigenous individual has elected to pay a reduced licence renewal fee for the salmon licence eligibility. Category FA licence eligibilities provide similar fishing privileges as category A licence eligibilities, however, they may not be nominated to another party and are intended to be held for the benefit of the recipient First Nations communities. Category FA licence eligibilities allow Indigenous communities to designate a vessel annually to carry out the fishing. As of 2026, Northern Native Fishing Society holds 140 communal commercial Salmon Gill Net licence eligibilities, previously recorded as Salmon category NAG licence eligibilities.

Since 1993/1994, DFO has obtained a total of 499 commercial salmon fishing licence eligibilities through a voluntary relinquishment process. Once obtained by DFO, those commercial licence eligibilities are relinquished and then issued as communal commercial (category FA) licence eligibilities and provided to support various Indigenous programs and initiatives including the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS, see section 10.3), the Allocation Transfer Program (ATP), the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI), First Nations Inland Demonstration Fisheries projects, Economic Opportunity Fishery arrangements and treaties. 134 communal commercial salmon licence eligibilities were issued to First Nations under the AFS and ATP, 47 were issued under PICFI, 257 were used to offset First Nations demonstration fisheries projects and Economic Opportunity fishery arrangements with First Nations in the lower Fraser, Somass, Skeena and Nass Rivers, and 21 were used for treaties or other contingencies.

Tsawwassen and Maa-nulth First Nations Treaties came into effect on April 3, 2009 and April 1, 2011, respectively. Most recently, the Tla'amin First Nation's Treaty came into effect on April 5, 2016. For additional information please see section 10.1.1.

4.2 RECREATIONAL FISHERY

Recreational fishing for salmon provides food for personal use, as a leisure activity, or as a combination of the two. These activities provide non-quantifiable benefits to the individual participants as well as contribute directly and indirectly to the economy through fishery related expenditures. This section focuses on economic activity rather than the economic benefits to individual anglers or businesses. Catch levels in the recreational fishery are managed using area specific openings and retention levels.

In the most recent survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada (2023), tidal water recreational fishing led to \$622 million dollars (2024\$) in expenditures and major purchases in British Columbia. The average total expenditure from 2021-2023 was \$662 million dollars (2024\$). Recreational fishing effort directed toward salmon accounted for an estimated 61% of all angler expenditures, or \$381 million. Of these, \$279million was spent in Southern BC (Johnston Strait, Georgia Strait, Barkley Sound, and West Coast Vancouver Island).

However, due to conservation-related fishery management measures, the 2019 fishing season experienced significant restrictions which would have lowered participation, catches, and expenditures. In addition to these conservation related management measures, the 2020 season was also significantly impacted by travel restrictions and a downturn in the economy related to the coronavirus pandemic. Similar effects extended into the 2021 and 2022 seasons. Even if BC residents were less likely to be impacted by travel restrictions, it would be reasonable to expect a reduction in their angling days, distance they traveled to fish, and in their total investments and purchases related to recreational fishing. BC residents make up a majority of active anglers and days fished and are responsible for most of the expenditures generated in the sector. However, sport fishers from outside BC spend more on fishing trip packages and make up an important client base for lodges and charter operations.

In order to fish for salmon recreationally an angler must purchase either a tidal or a freshwater licence. Further, in order to keep this catch the licence must have an attached Pacific Salmon Conservation (PSF) Stamp. The number of licences and stamps that can be sold is not restricted and is one way to highlight the level of participation of angler groups in the fishery. Licence data show that the total number of licences and salmon stamps sold was relatively stable from 2001 to 2008 (Figure 4-1). Starting in 2008, there were consecutive drops in sales of licences specifically to non-residents (i.e. anglers that did not reside in BC) until 2013/14. Some of the drop was made up by increased sales to residents and the number of licences sold remained relatively steady at the lower level until 2013/14. Sharp increases in the sale of licences to both residents and non-residents in the 2014/15 season resulted in one of the largest annual licence sales in at least 14 years. Since then, annual licence sales remained relatively steady at this higher level, with a minor drop in 2019 potentially driven in part by management restrictions put in place due to conservation-related fishery management measures. Total licence sales in the 2020/21 season were severely impacted due to COVID-19 with respect to travel restrictions leading to zero non-resident licences sold. However, licence sales to residents rose by 2% year over year, though economic impacts of the pandemic likely weighed on participation generally, as can be seen in the recreational catch statistics below. The 2021/22 season saw a sharp 11% year-over-year increase in license sales to residents, and a minor recovery of license sales to non-residents. Lingering discomfort with travelling and travel restrictions, along with inflation, may be the cause for the low number of sales to non-residents.

In the 2022/23 season, licence sales to residents decreased slightly by 1.9%. This drop was more than made up for by increased sales to non-residents (459%). The subsequent 2023/24 season experienced a notable 10% year-over-year growth in licence sales to residents, while the number of licence sales to non-residents remained stable.

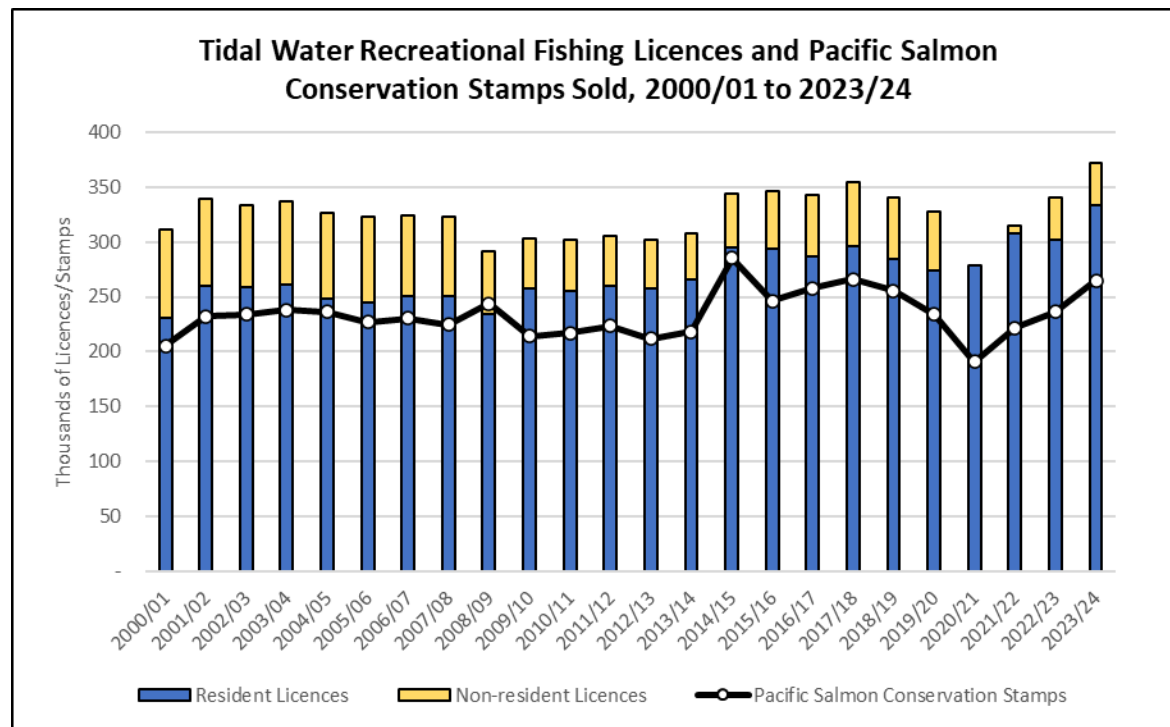


Figure 4-1: Tidal Water Recreational Fishing Licences and Pacific Salmon Conservation Stamps Sold, 2000/01 to 2023/24. Source: DFO. <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/licence-permis/stats-eng.html>

The Survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada provides an estimate of individual expenditures and investment for recreational fishing. This information is used when estimating the direct and indirect contribution of recreational fishing to the economy (e.g. GDP, employment). The survey is generally administered every 5 years, but it is reasonable to expect highlighted trends to be fairly constant from year to year, barring any significant changes in fishing opportunities, like those seen in the last two years. Historically, the combined tidal and freshwater fisheries of BC were the second largest recreational fisheries in Canada in terms of direct and package expenditures, and third largest in terms of investments (DFO 2015). While resident anglers have the largest expenditures, recreational fishing by non-residents also contributes to the provincial economy. In 2023, non-resident direct expenditures (including fishing packages) and investments totaled \$237 million. This number understates the contribution of non-resident tidal water anglers to the overall economy, however, as it only includes expenditures directly attributable to their fishing experience^[1]. Fishing opportunities in BC's tidal waters draw Canadian and international tourists to the province: of 47,269 non-resident anglers surveyed in

2010, 40% reported that they would not have come to British Columbia at all if there had been no opportunities for tidal water angling^[2]. A further 19% would have shortened their stay in the province.

Recreational salmon catch fluctuates year to year, both as a consequence of user participation as well as ecological/biological factors. On average, from 2016-2019, 819 thousand pieces of salmon were caught recreationally coastwide in BC^[3]. The 2020 season saw a dramatic decline, dropping 36% from the previous 4-year average to 526 thousand pieces. However, the 2021 season saw a 103% increase over 2020 levels to 1.07 million pieces. It is clear that COVID-19 travel restrictions severely impacted the recreational salmon fishing sector in 2020, but 2021 saw a resurgence that resulted in 31% more catch than the 4 year average between 2016-2019. Catch estimates have been on a consistent upward trend since the 2021 season. The 2022 season saw an 8% increase from the 2021 level, reaching 1.2 million pieces. This growth continued into the 2023 season, which saw a 23% rise from the 2022 level, amounting to 1.4 million pieces. The 2024 season remained stable at approximately 1.4 million pieces. Although catch numbers have fluctuated in recent years, the proportion of species caught has remained fairly the same. Between 2015 and 2024, more than half of the recreational catch can be attributed to Chinook (54%), followed by Coho (31%), Pink (7%), Sockeye (6%), and Chum (2%).

Figure 4-2 shows the tidal recreational expenditures for all recreational fishing species by resident and non-resident anglers from 2000 to 2023, adjusted to reflect constant 2024 dollars. Though recreational fishing continues to be important to the BC economy, the rate of growth overall has slowed: total expenditures and investments grew by nearly 15% from 2000 to 2005, but by only 1% from 2005 to 2010. From 2010 to 2015, total expenditures and investments in the tidal recreational fishing industry decreased by 26%. This slowdown is due mainly to a drop in visits (and therefore expenditures) to BC by non-resident anglers, particularly other (i.e. international) non-resident anglers whose total expenditures in BC dropped by 48% between 2005 and 2010 and dropped again by 12% between 2010 and 2015. Between 2015 and 2020, the tidal recreational fishing industry saw a 22% decline in total expenditures and investments. However, there was a rebound with a 18% increase in 2021 and a slight 2% increase in 2022. Despite this recovery, there was a subsequent 9% decrease in 2023. This decrease was primarily due to a 10% reduction in expenditures by BC resident anglers, coupled with a 9% drop in expenditures by non-resident anglers.

Expenditure on fishing packages by resident anglers increased considerably from 2000-2010; in real terms, it increased by 140% in that time period. However, in the following 5 years, expenditures on fishing packages by resident anglers decreased by 21%, as total expenditures by residents fell by 32%. From 2015 to 2020, there was a significant 54% decrease in expenditure on fishing packages by resident anglers. However, 2021 saw a substantial rebound with a 111% increase in such expenditures. This was followed by a 15% decrease in 2022 and a further 5%

drop in 2023. Nonetheless, BC residents remain key consumers of fishing trip packages in the province.

B.C. Tidal Water Recreational Fishing Expenditures for all Species by Angler Type (2024\$)				
2000				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 187,743,460	\$ 30,195,107	\$ 338,347,742	\$ 556,286,309
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 41,014,508	\$ 35,134,558	\$ 41,792,356	\$ 117,941,421
Other non-resident	\$ 88,649,820	\$ 72,803,508	\$ 20,929,791	\$ 182,383,119
Total	\$ 317,407,788	\$ 138,133,172	\$ 401,069,889	\$ 856,610,849
2005				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 228,738,468	\$ 62,492,577	\$ 386,534,865	\$ 677,765,910
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 50,119,198	\$ 58,464,566	\$ 18,368,296	\$ 126,952,061
Other non-resident	\$ 72,013,446	\$ 96,165,229	\$ 11,999,896	\$ 180,178,571
Total	\$ 350,871,112	\$ 217,122,373	\$ 416,903,057	\$ 984,896,542
2010				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 276,478,904	\$ 72,351,098	\$ 442,560,483	\$ 791,390,485
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 44,245,311	\$ 37,014,248	\$ 26,066,538	\$ 107,326,096
Other non-resident	\$ 45,192,855	\$ 41,605,459	\$ 7,020,492	\$ 93,818,807
Total	\$ 365,917,070	\$ 150,970,805	\$ 475,647,513	\$ 992,535,388
2015				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 238,103,204	\$ 57,020,957	\$ 242,362,635	\$ 537,486,796
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 52,006,711	\$ 43,261,291	\$ 14,798,558	\$ 110,066,561
Other non-resident	\$ 46,686,636	\$ 34,358,249	\$ 1,841,908	\$ 82,886,793
Total	\$ 336,796,551	\$ 134,640,497	\$ 259,003,101	\$ 730,440,149
2020				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 230,734,619	\$ 26,221,262	\$ 243,850,148	\$ 500,806,030
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 41,739,495	\$ 7,318,234	\$ 21,602,215	\$ 70,659,945
Other non-resident	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ 272,474,114	\$ 33,539,496	\$ 265,452,364	\$ 571,465,974
2021				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 258,883,938	\$ 55,360,219	\$ 226,566,895	\$ 540,811,052
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 60,359,715	\$ 48,663,439	\$ 7,773,008	\$ 116,796,162
Other non-resident	\$ 8,240,634	\$ 9,809,922	\$ 611,068	\$ 18,661,623
Total	\$ 327,484,287	\$ 113,833,580	\$ 234,950,970	\$ 676,268,837
2022				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 221,305,771	\$ 46,819,331	\$ 162,550,047	\$ 430,675,148
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 69,086,790	\$ 46,087,545	\$ 9,192,870	\$ 124,367,204
Other non-resident	\$ 66,726,249	\$ 61,829,379	\$ 3,813,662	\$ 132,369,290
Total	\$ 357,118,811	\$ 154,736,254	\$ 175,556,579	\$ 687,411,643
2023				
	Direct Expenses	Packages	Investments	Total
Resident	\$ 187,548,869	\$ 44,302,077	\$ 156,056,531	\$ 387,907,477
CDN Non-Resident	\$ 62,508,618	\$ 35,317,321	\$ 11,031,113	\$ 108,857,052
Other non-resident	\$ 68,468,084	\$ 51,505,985	\$ 5,498,916	\$ 125,472,985
Total	\$ 318,525,572	\$ 131,125,382	\$ 172,586,560	\$ 622,237,514

Figure 4–2: Tidal Water Recreational Fishing Direct and Package Expenditures and Investments for all species, in constant (2024) dollars. Source: Survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada (DFO, multiple years)

Note: Survey data till 2015 was based on the calendar year. Survey data for 2020-2023 follows the fishing season (April to March).

The past few years since 2019 can be expected to have accentuated the trend in declining expenditures by international anglers, given salmon management restrictions and especially COVID-19 travel restrictions and broader economic impacts. In 2023, salmon accounted for

roughly 62% of expenditures on fishing trip packages and 61% of total expenditures overall in the tidal recreational fishing industry in British Columbia (Figure 4–3).

2023 North Coast Salmon Tidal Rec. Expenditures (2024\$)				
	Direct Expenditures	Packages	Investments	Total
Residents	\$ 14,959,993	\$ 12,376,248	\$ 8,371,820	\$ 35,708,060
Canadian non-resident	\$ 12,635,855	\$ 15,215,102	\$ 1,502,822	\$ 29,353,779
Other non-resident	\$ 13,611,537	\$ 22,419,440	\$ 651,124	\$ 36,682,101
Total	\$ 41,207,385	\$ 50,010,790	\$ 10,525,765	\$ 101,743,940

2023 South Coast Salmon Tidal Rec. Expenditures (2024\$)				
	Direct Expenditures	Packages	Investments	Total
Residents	\$ 95,237,991	\$ 14,798,043	\$ 91,788,419	\$ 201,824,454
Canadian non-resident	\$ 21,531,031	\$ 6,025,699	\$ 6,153,024	\$ 33,709,754
Other non-resident	\$ 31,095,855	\$ 10,088,383	\$ 2,101,413	\$ 43,285,651
Total	\$ 147,864,877	\$ 30,912,125	\$ 100,042,856	\$ 278,819,859

Figure 4–3: Tidal Water Recreational Fishing Direct and Package Expenditures and Investments for Salmon, North Coast and South Coast, in constant (2024) dollars. Source: Survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada

^[1] The British Columbia's Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector (BC Stats 2013) report, which calculates direct and indirect economic activity, indicates that non-resident participants in recreational tidal water fishing also spend money on, for example, shopping, cultural events and attractions (such as museums and the theatre), and sightseeing at locations other than where they go fishing.

^[2] This can be further broken down into Canadian non-residents and international non-residents. Opportunities for tidal water recreational fishing are more important to international visitors: 47% of them reported they would not have come to BC had there not been tidal water fishing opportunities, while 32% of Canadian visitors would not have come.

^[3] PSC Salmon Post Season Review, multiple years

4.3 COMMERCIAL FISHERY

4.3.1 HARVEST SECTOR

In BC, the salmon fishery is a limited access fishery, mostly managed as a competitive fishery ; however, several parts of the fishery are operated under individual quotas. Since 2005, five areas using seine, troll or gill net gear have participated in demonstration fisheries with alternative implementations of individual quotas or pooling arrangements. In addition, there have been several commercial First Nations economic opportunity and demonstration fisheries. Commercially harvested salmon supports BC's seafood processing sector, much of which is ultimately exported, bringing new money into the province.

Between 2013 and 2024, salmon contributed an average of 15% of the landed value and 10% of the total volume of BC wild caught seafood (DFO Official Catch, 2013-2024). The real value, in

2024 constant dollars, ranged from a high of \$150 million in 2014 to a low of \$22 million in 2019. Fluctuating since 2019, the value reached \$42 million in 2022. In 2023, it declined by 44% to \$23 million, before rebounding in 2024 with a 37% increase to \$32 million (Figure 4-4).

Due to conservation-related fishery management measures, the 2019 fishing season saw the lowest landed value on record as commercial landed value fell to roughly 28% of the previous 4-year average (2015-2018). 2023 marked the second-lowest year on record, experiencing a 44% decline from the previous year and amounting to approximately 51% of the five-year average (2018-2022). All marine commercial areas were impacted but Area E was most affected with virtually no catch.

Many vessels elected not to take part in the fishery. In fact, the number of active vessels fell from 924 in 2018 (a high return/high participation year) to 601 in 2019, a decrease of 35%. In 2020, there was a slight resurgence in effort in the commercial fishery, with 635 active vessels. The number remained low due to conservation-related fishery management measures continuing, along with pandemic-related health and safety restrictions delaying the start of the fishing season, among other factors. However, this number fell again in the 2021 season by roughly 40% to 379 active vessels, likely associated with the significant reduction in the number of openings for the fishery associated with Pacific salmon conservation measures, as well as continuing pandemic-related health and safety restrictions. Data for the 2022 season shows 489 active vessels, an increase of 29% from the 2021 season. This increase was expected as the 2022 season includes high Sockeye return due to it being a Sockeye bump year. In 2023, the number of active vessels declined slightly, dropping by 8% to 448 from the previous year. This downward trend continued in 2024, with a further 10% decrease to 403 vessels.

There was a 95% increase in total landings (kgs) from 2021 to 2022 with landed value increasing by 70% to \$42 million. This significant increase is mainly the result of 2022 being a Sockeye salmon bump year, forming 47% of the total landings and 54% of the total value. On average between 2013 and 2024, Pink salmon accounted for an average of 32% of total salmon catch. However, in 2013 and 2020, Pink made up 63% of salmon catch, and in 2024, it made up 44%, contributing to relatively lower landed value totals in those years. Conservation concerns are expected to continue into future years, negatively impacting the returns to the commercial fleet, while additional closures may further reduce access in the short term.

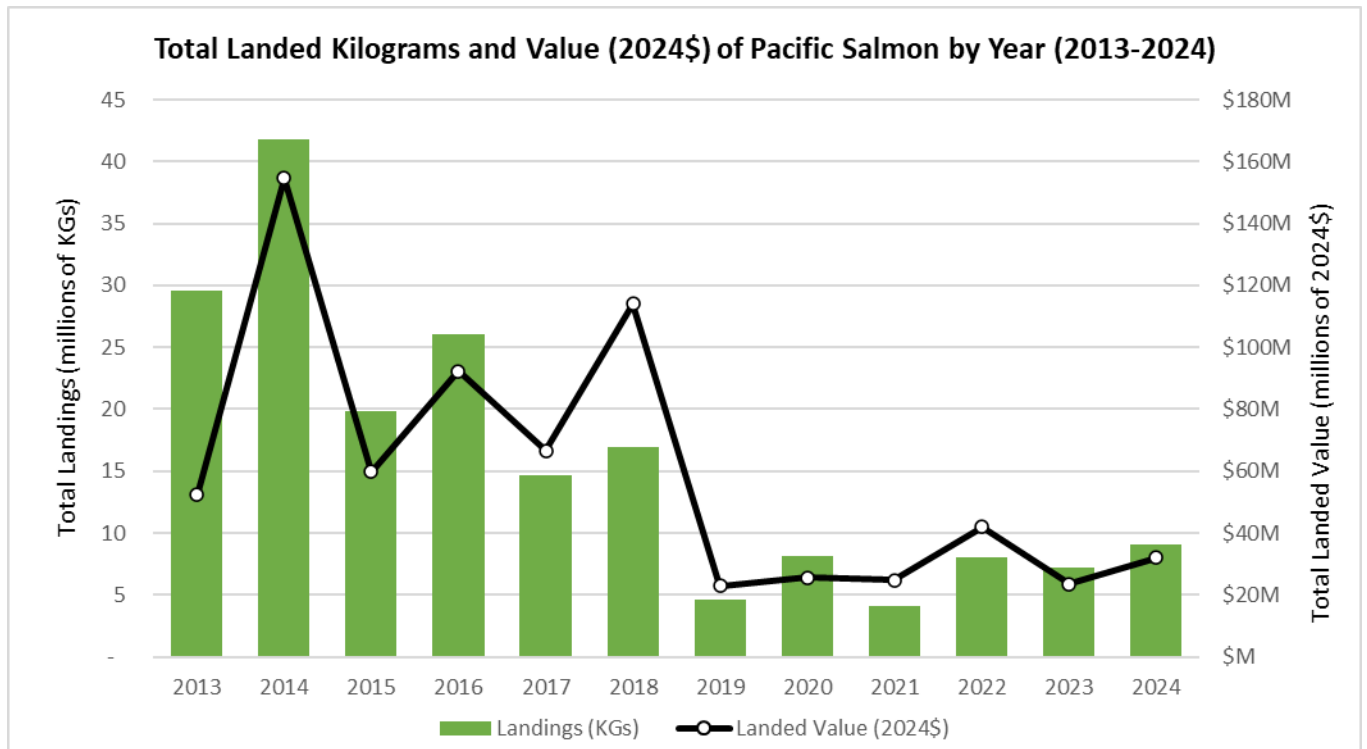


Figure 4-4: Total Landed Kilograms and Value (2024\$) of Pacific Salmon by Year (2013-2024).
 Source: DFO Official Catch matched to the best available price from sales slips. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

Note: Salmon landed value estimates may differ slightly from other sources due to varying price estimates. Prices used here are “best available” based on matching criteria using date, gear and area.

Chinook and Chum make up the majority of the landed value in most years, with the exception being years when there is a high return of Sockeye (Figure 4-5).

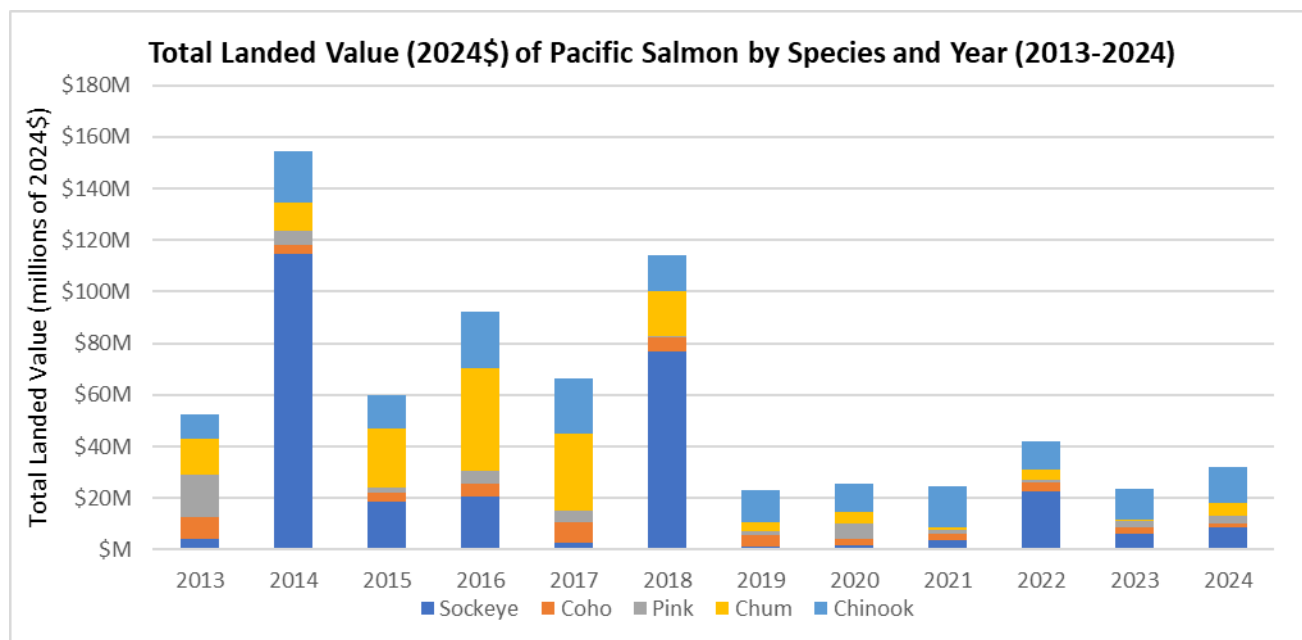


Figure 4–5: Total Landed Value (2024\$) of Pacific Salmon by Species and Year (2013-2024). Source: DFO Official Catch matched to the best available price from sales slips. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

Note: Salmon landed value estimates may differ slightly from other sources due to varying price estimates. Prices used here are “best available” based on matching criteria using date, gear and area.

Figure 4–4 and Figure 4–5 present landings (kilograms) and landed value (2024\$) of Pacific Salmon by licence area from 2019-2024. For the most part, the graphs coincide with one another; higher landings result in higher landed value. However, salmon licence areas A and F show the opposite story: licence area A has higher landings each year (except for 2019, 2021) compared to licence area F, but area F has higher landed values. This is the result of the majority of catch over the period in area A being Pink Salmon (68%), which has the lowest value in terms of price per kilogram, and area F landing primarily Chinook (42%) and Coho (33%), which have the highest and third highest value in terms of average price per kilogram in the North Coast, respectively.

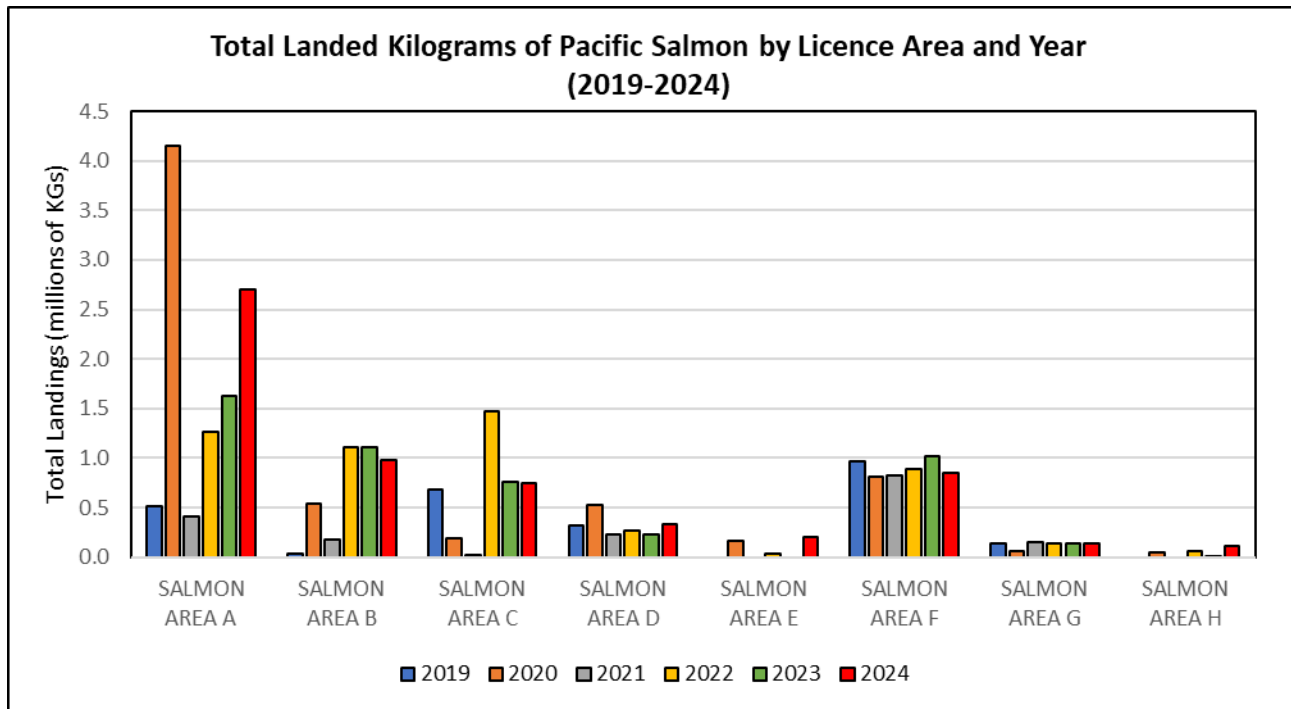


Figure 4-6: Total Landed Kilograms of Pacific Salmon by Licence Area by Year (2019-2024*). Source: DFO Official Catch matched to the best available price from sales slips. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

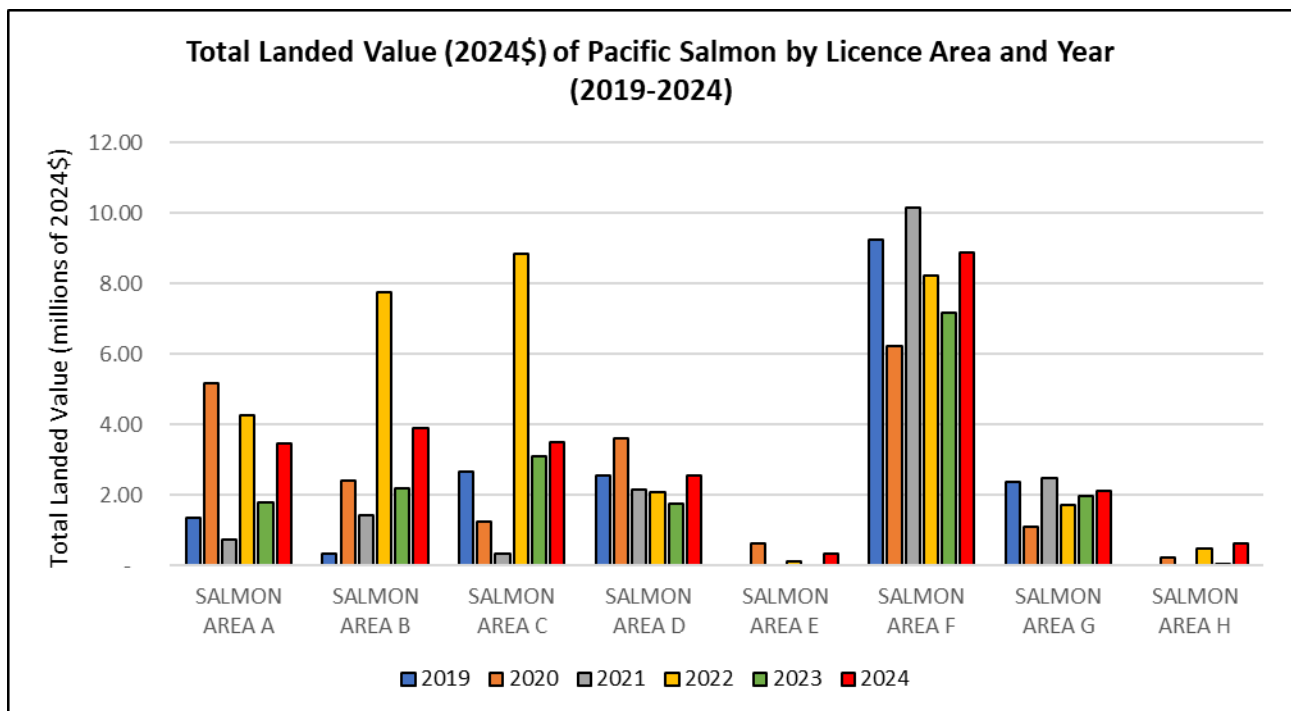


Figure 4-7: Total Landed Value (2024\$) of Pacific Salmon by Licence Area by Year (2019-2024*). Source: DFO Official Catch matched to the best available price from sales slips. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

Between 2013 and 2024, the South Coast fishery was responsible for an average of 50% of the total volume and 50% total landed value of salmon landings, with the North Coast making up the remainder. In non-Sockeye bump years, the North Coast catches more salmon than the South Coast, but the South Coast has secured most of the benefits of the large salmon runs in years such as 2014 and 2018. The record Fraser River Sockeye run in 2014 meant that the South Coast accounted for 72% and 79% of the landed volume and value in that year, respectively. With another Sockeye boom in 2018, the South Coast again accounted for 71% and 75% of the landed volume and value, respectively. As Sockeye spawn every four years, the 2022 season was expected to also result in a high Sockeye run. However, data for 2022 shows that the South Coast only accounted for 40% of the landed volume and value, respectively. This is due to a low Fraser River Sockeye return, as well as the majority of sockeye salmon being caught in the North Coast. Data for 2023 show that landed values in both the North and South Coasts are relatively close to those in 2021. In 2024, the North Coast accounted for 55% of the landed volume and 56% of the total landed value, with the South Coast comprising the rest.

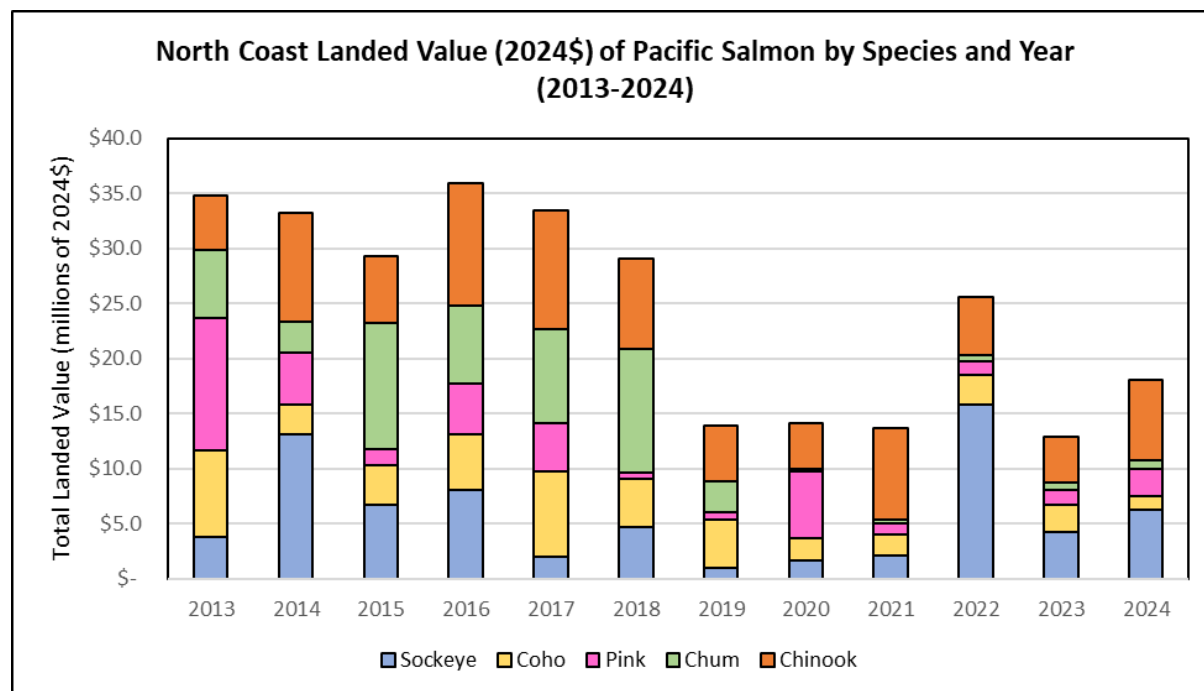


Figure 4-8: North Coast Salmon value by species, 2013-2024 (in 2024\$). Source: DFO Official Catch matched to best available price from sales slips. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

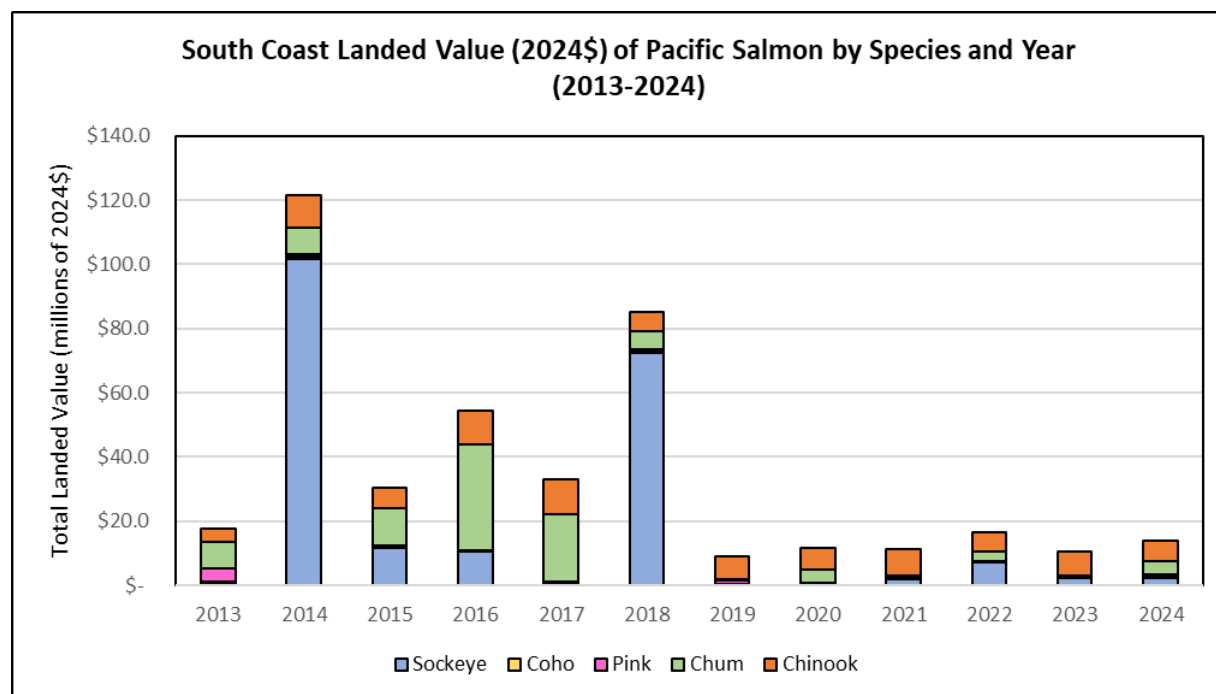


Figure 4-9: South Coast salmon value by species, 2013-2024 (in 2024\$). Source: DFO Official Catch matched to best available price from sales slips. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

Note: Salmon landed value estimates may differ slightly from other sources due to varying price estimates. Prices used here are “best available” based on matching criteria using date, gear and area.

Salmon licence values declined steadily from 2005 to 2010, reflecting poor returns to the fleets (Nelson, various years). Seine licences have recovered somewhat since then, while gillnet and troll licences have been steady with troll showing improvements in 2014. License values are a reflection of expected future financial returns but also of speculation. The value of a seine licence remained constant from 2016-2018 (\$423K) and increased by 25% to \$528K in 2019 (Castlemain, various years). However, in 2020 it decreased by 39% to \$324K before recovering slightly to \$386K in 2021. It decreased by 10% again in 2022 and remained steady at 349K in 2023.

Gillnet licence values steadily increased from 2015-2018 (\$54K to \$69K), but fell back to \$55K in 2019 and continued to decrease year-over-year thereafter. By 2021, the average gillnet licence value had decreased to \$37K, a figure that remained unchanged through 2022 and 2023. Troll licence values experienced a similar trend to gillnet, increasing from 2015-2018 (\$125K to \$199K), and falling in 2019 to \$166K. It continued to decrease in 2020, reaching \$141K. A slight recovery was observed in 2021, with the value rising to \$152K. However, it dropped by 9% to \$138K the following year, before rebounding by 30% to reach \$180K in 2023.

The salmon fleet's financial performance is best reviewed over several years, given the fisheries significant annual swing in harvest. For the seine fishery, the percentage of revenue attributed to the diversified fleet increased from 21% to 22%, when comparing the 2021-2024 average to the 2024 year. For the gillnet fishery, the percentage of revenue attributed to the diversified fleet also increased from 22% to 24% in comparing 2021-2024 average to the 2024 year. For the troll fishery, the percentage of revenue attributed to the troll diversified fleet remained stable at around 59% when comparing the 2021-2024 average to the 2024 year. The troll fishery is more diversified than the other gear types due to loss of opportunity and the troll gear lending itself well to other fisheries, such as halibut. The cost structure of salmon fleets in BC is available through various reports (Nelson, 2009 & 2011 as well as Gislason 2011).

4.3.2 PROCESSING SECTOR

Wild salmon has consistently accounted for an average of 21% of the total wholesale value of wild caught seafood in BC ((Annual Fisheries Production Schedule, 2021-2024).

The latest study on linkages between seafood harvesting and processing prepared by GS Gislason & Associates in August 2017 allows estimation of the total labour wages in salmon processing sector in 2016, by salmon species. Between 2021-2024, Sockeye accounted for most of the processing sector wages (38%), followed by Pink (27%), Chinook (16%), Chum (12%) and Coho (8%). In 2024, processing sector wages were up 31% compared to the previous 4-year average, primarily due to a significant increase in Chum salmon landings, which rose 381% from 2023 to 2024. Applying the Gislason & Associates (2017) estimates to 2024 DFO logbook information, processing of salmon species delivered about \$1.7M (Sockeye), \$2.1M (Pink), \$0.8M

(Chinook), \$1.4M (Chum), and \$0.4M (Coho) in processing sector labour wages in 2024 dollars (Figure 4–10).

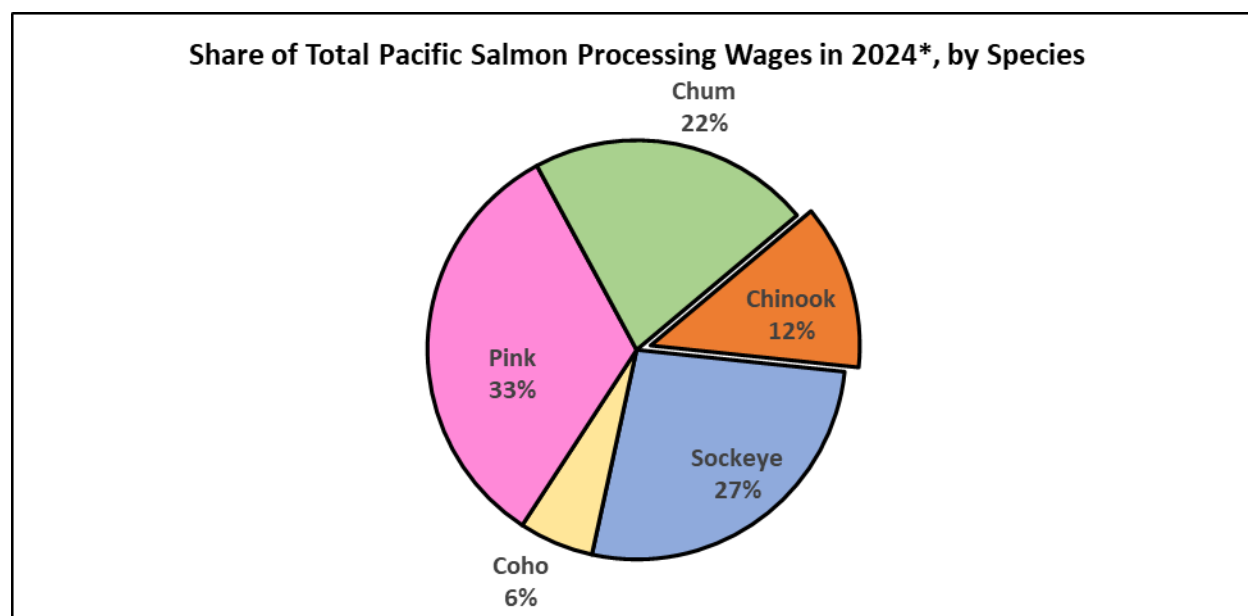


Figure 4–10: Share of the total value of processing sector wages in 2024* (by salmon species).
Source: GS Gislason and Associates (2017), DFO Official Catch *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

Sockeye was the most processed salmon species by volume and total value of processing sector wages among all BC wild salmon in 2022. The elevated volume was due to 2022 being a Sockeye bump year. Additionally, Sockeye was estimated as the most labour intensive species in processing with a labour intensity of about 34 hours per metric tonne (MT) (GSGislason & Associates, 2017). In 2023, Pink took the lead as the species with the highest processing volume and total value in processing sector wages, and this trend continued in 2024.

The GSGislason 2017 study also indicates that salmon processing is frequently pursued in a different region than the area where landings are loaded off the fishing vessels. For example, while Chinook landings occur mostly on the North Coast, its processing happens mainly in the Lower Mainland (about 65% of all processed Chinook). Similarly, landings of Coho also happen mainly on the North Coast (80%), but its processing is pursued mainly in the Lower Mainland (74%). Pink salmon is landed mainly in the North Coast (about 60%) and is processed in the North Coast and Lower Mainland (45% and 40%, respectively). Chum landings (63%) and processing (75%) occurs mostly in Lower Mainland. Sockeye landings and processing occurs mostly on Vancouver Island (58% and 55%, respectively) (GSGislason & Associates, 2017).

4.4 EXPORT MARKET

The province of British Columbia benefits from strong seafood exports that in 2024 were valued at roughly \$1.3 billion, a 5% decrease when compared to 2023, and a 15% decrease over the annual average between 2020-2023.^[1] This total value was realized via a combination of seafood supplied by domestic wild harvest and aquaculture (Statistics Canada EXIM Database).

Chum, Sockeye and Chinook salmon were among the most widely exported Pacific salmon species in 2024 (by volume). They constituted 32%, 26% and 24% of the total volume of Pacific salmon exports from BC, respectively.

In 2024, Chum was shipped to 19 countries, with the largest proportions exported to the US and China (by value). In 2024, Sockeye was exported to 14 countries, with the largest proportions of exports going to the US and China (by value). Pink salmon was exported to 19 countries with the largest proportions exported to China and Thailand (by value). Chinook was shipped to 8 countries, with the largest proportions exported to the US and Japan (by value). Coho was exported to only 6 countries, with the largest proportions exported to the US and Australia (by value).

Notwithstanding the above, salmon exports in recent years have been affected by the lower harvest levels. The annual value of all Pacific salmon exports from 2010-2018 averaged \$167M annually, while the average annual value between 2019-2024 was roughly \$93M, or approximately 56% of the previous 9 year average (in 2024\$). Chinook made up approximately 29% of the average annual export value of Pacific salmon between 2010 and 2018, while it made up 54% of the annual value on average between 2019 and 2024 (in 2024\$). Further, the proportion of total annual export value attributable to Chum went from 15% to 9% between 2010 and 2018 and between 2019 and 2024, respectively. The proportion attributable to Coho remained steady at 6%, while Pink went from 14% to 5% and Sockeye went from 35% to 26% between the two time periods, respectively. In 2024, the export value increased to approximately \$117M from \$79M the previous year, driven primarily by substantial growth in Chum and Sockeye export volumes, which rose by 267% and 130%, respectively. (Figure 4-11 and Figure 4-12).

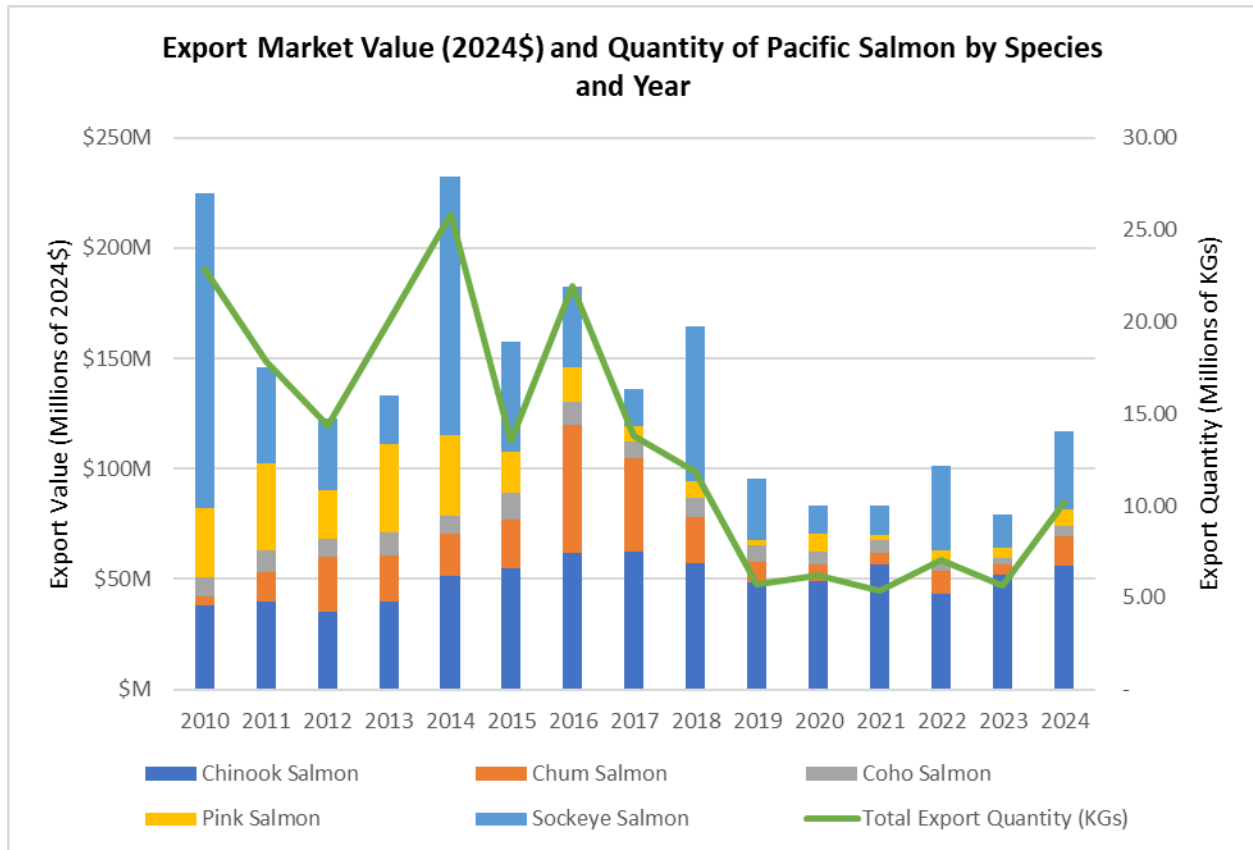


Figure 4-I I: Total value and quantity of Pacific salmon exports (in 2024 constant dollars), 2010-2024*. Source: Statistics Canada EXIM database accessed on Nov 2025.*Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

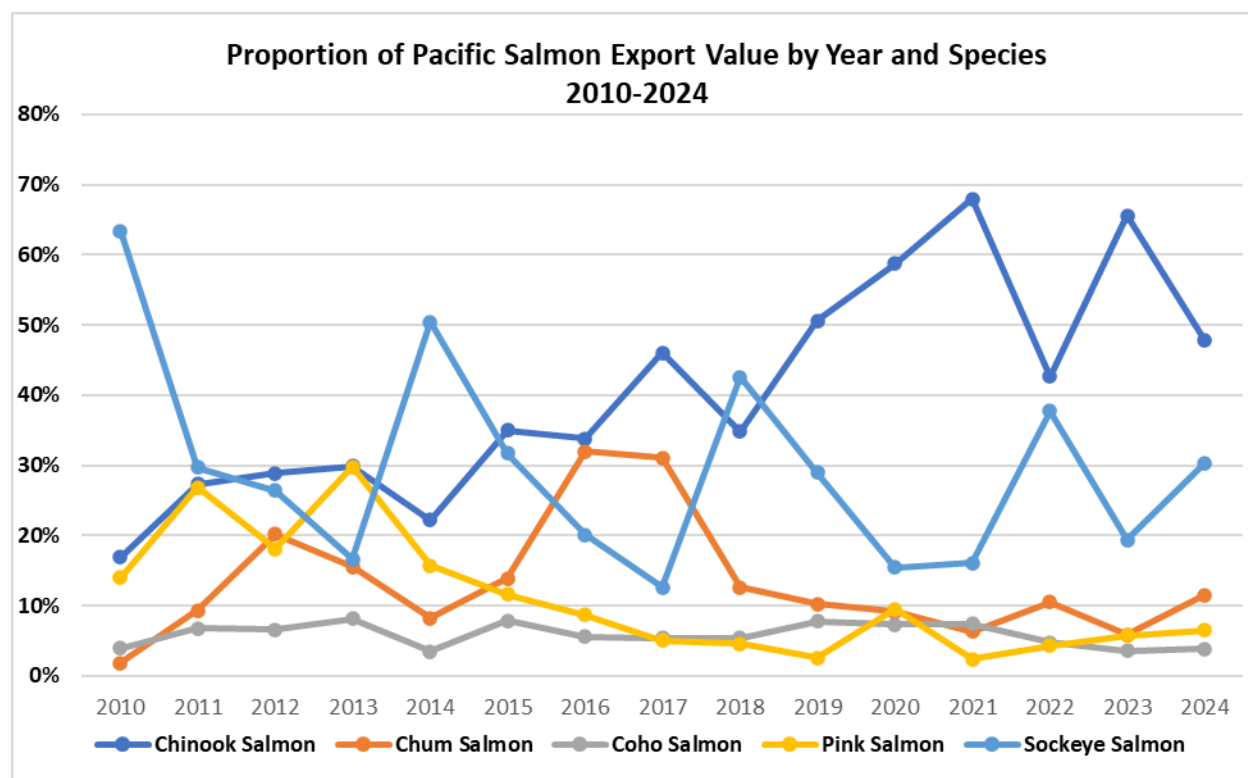


Figure 4–12: Proportion of Pacific salmon annual export value by species, 2010-2024*. Source: Statistics Canada EXIM database accessed on November, 2025. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

Note: this total includes all exports of wild Pacific salmon and exports of all farmed Pacific salmon. There might be slight differences in total export value when comparing exports in previous versions/previous years of IFMP due to changing products definitions in EXIM data. In this data only Pacific salmon species were included.

Overall, from 2019 to 2024, BC exported Pacific salmon to 50 countries. The US accounted for about 73% of the total export value in that period, followed by Japan (10%). China and the UK were the next largest individual importers of BC Pacific salmon in that period (3% and 2%, respectively). For more details, please refer to Figure 4–13 and Figure 4–14 below.

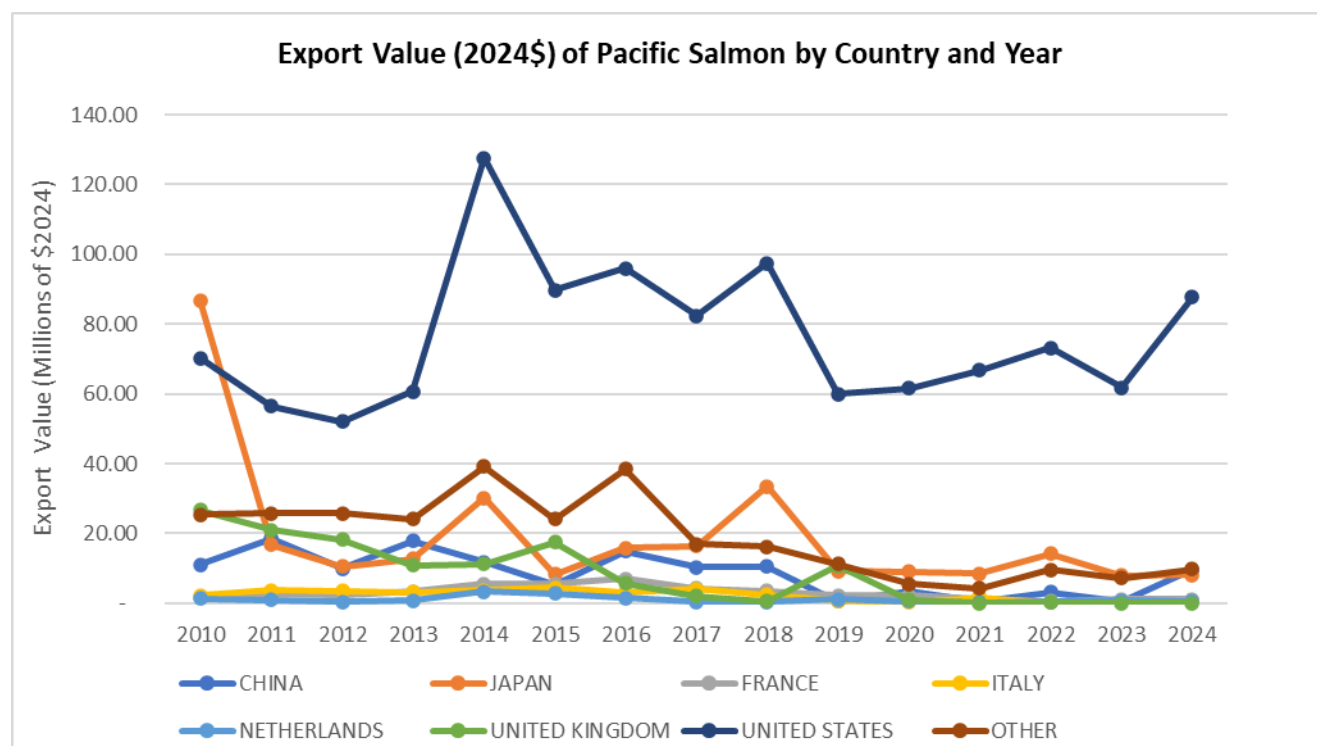


Figure 4-13: Total value of Pacific salmon exports from BC per main importers, 2010-2024* (in 2024\$). Source: Statistics Canada EXIM database accessed on November 2025. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

Figure 4-14 shows the proportions of Pacific Salmon exported by value and destinations in 2024. In 2024, approximately \$117M worth of Pacific salmon was exported from BC. Of the total \$117M, about 75% of the total export value of Pacific salmon is attributable to the United States (\$88M), 8% to China (\$9.5M), 7% to Japan (\$8M), and the remaining 9% to all other countries (\$12M). The export value declined year-over-year from 2019 through 2021. They rose by 22% in 2022 to \$101 million, but then dropped sharply by 22% to \$79 million in 2023. In 2024, export values rebounded, increasing by 48% to \$117 million.

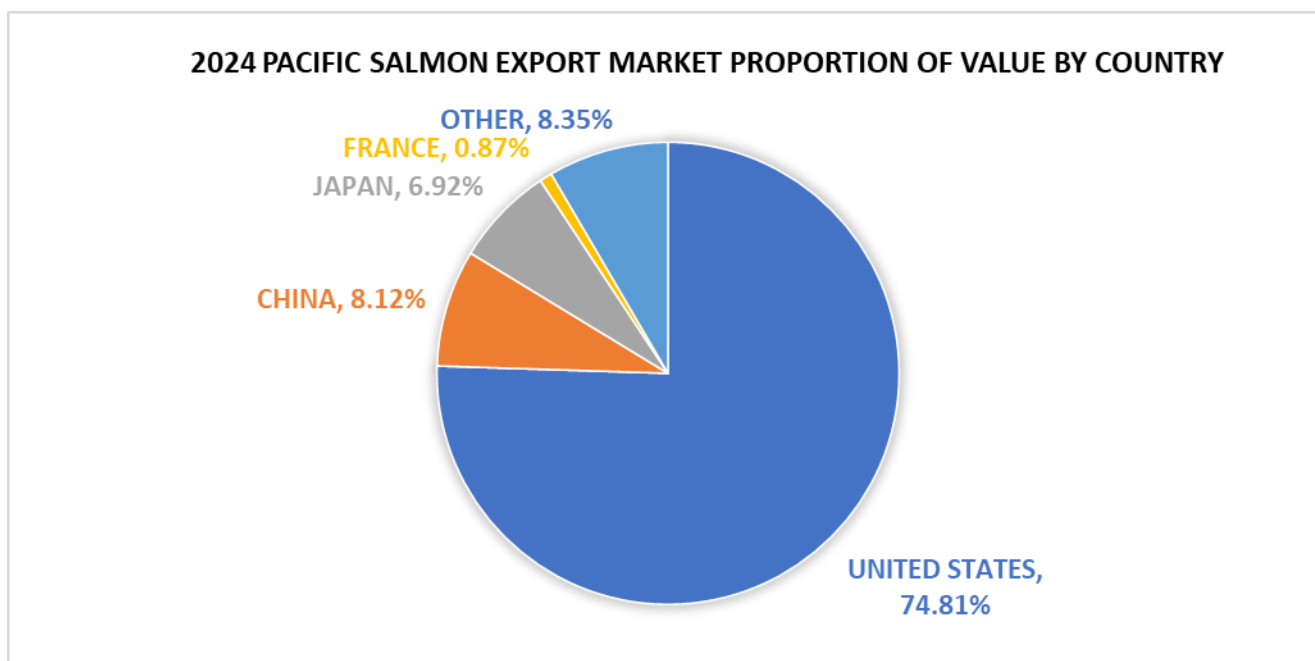


Figure 4–14: Proportions of total value of Pacific salmon exports from BC by main destination countries in 2024* Source: Statistics Canada EXIM database accessed in November 2025. *Estimates for 2024 are to be treated as preliminary

[\[1\]](#) Statistics Canada EXIM Database; value in real terms.

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5 MANAGEMENT ISSUES

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5.1 CONSERVATION

Given the importance of Pacific salmon to the culture and socio-economic fabric of Canada, conservation of these stocks is of utmost importance. To achieve this, specific actions are taken to not only ensure protection of fish stocks, but also to protect freshwater and marine habitats. Protecting a broad range of stocks is the most prudent way of maintaining biodiversity and genetic integrity.

Management of a natural resource like salmon has a number of inherent risks. Uncertain forecasting, environmental and biological variability as well as changes in harvester behavior all add risks that can threaten conservation. Accordingly, management actions will be precautionary and risks will be specifically evaluated where possible.

5.1.1 WILD SALMON POLICY

Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon (the Wild Salmon Policy) sets out the vision regarding the importance and role of Pacific wild salmon as well as a strategy for their protection.

To communicate the work the Department is doing in support of the policy, Canada's Minister of Fisheries, and Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard released the *Wild Salmon Policy 2018-2022 Implementation Plan* in October 2018. This collaboratively-developed plan was consulted on broadly throughout fall 2017, and laid out nine overarching approaches to implementation and specific activities that DFO would undertake. The plan is organized under three key themes: Assessment; Maintaining and Rebuilding Stocks; and Accountability. In 2023, DFO also released a five-year review of the Implementation Plan ([Wild salmon policy : 2018-2022 implementation plan : five-year review \(publications.gc.ca\)](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_06/978-1-101-70000-0.pdf)). For a copy of the *Wild Salmon Policy*, the *Wild Salmon Policy 2018-2022 Implementation Plan*, information on what we heard during consultations and response, annual reports, and other Wild Salmon Policy related materials, please see: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/wsp-pss/index-eng.html>

5.1.2 SPECIES AT RISK ACT

The purposes of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) are “to prevent wildlife species from being extirpated or becoming extinct, to provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered or threatened as a result of human activity and to manage species of special concern to prevent them from becoming endangered or threatened.”

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It is prohibited under SARA to kill, harm, harass, capture, take, possess, collect, buy, sell, or trade an individual or part of a wildlife species listed as extirpated, endangered, or threatened. It also prohibits the damage or destruction of residences and the destruction of any part of the critical habitat of a listed endangered or threatened species, or of any listed extirpated species if a recovery strategy has recommended the reintroduction of the species in the wild in Canada. Critical habitat is the habitat necessary for the survival or recovery of a listed wildlife species and is identified in the recovery strategy or an action plan for the species.

Activities affecting a listed species, any part of its critical habitat, or the residences of its individuals may require permitting (subject to meeting specific purposes and pre-conditions set out in SARA) or an exception/exemption. SARA prohibitions do not apply to species listed as special concern and there is no requirement to identify or protect critical habitat for special concern species.

For information on aquatic species listed under SARA or assessed as at risk by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, please visit the Species at Risk Public Registry at <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry.html>.

A species identification guide can be found here: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/identify-identifier-eng.html>

5.1.3 FISHERIES ACT: FISH STOCKS PROVISIONS

Amendments to the *Fisheries Act* (Bill C-68) were passed into legislation in 2019. The *Fishery (General) Regulations* were amended on April 4, 2022 and include requirements to maintain major fish stocks at sustainable levels, and develop and implement rebuilding plans for stocks that have declined to their critical zone. The amended regulation can be found here: <https://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/2022/2022-04-13/html/sor-dors73-eng.html>

As per Section 6.2 (1) of the *Fisheries Act*, “if a major fish stock has declined to or below its limit reference point (LRP), the Minister shall develop a plan to rebuild the stock above that point in the affected area.” Information on the requirements for rebuilding plans is available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/precautionary-precaution-eng.htm>

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5.2 OCEAN AND HABITAT CONSIDERATIONS

5.2.1 CANADA'S MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS CONSERVATION MANDATE

To protect biodiversity and meet its marine conservation targets, Canada is establishing marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), in consultation with First Nations, other levels of government, industry, non-governmental organizations, and the public.

More information is available online for:

Canada's marine conservation targets at <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/conservation/index-eng.html>

Canada's marine protected and conserved areas at <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/conservation/areas-zones/index-eng.html>

Marine refuges and fisheries management measures that qualify as OECMs at <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/oecm-amcepz/index-eng.html>

5.2.2 MARINE PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS

Canada uses a variety of legislative tools for marine conservation, depending on the lead federal department or agency and their coastal mandates. As goals, objectives, and management plans are finalized for these initiatives, DFO's management of fisheries will be adapted as appropriate, in consultation with interested parties through initiative-specific consultations and annual Integrated Fisheries Management processes. The implementation of spatial marine conservation initiatives is informed by considerations under the *Oceans Act*, *Fisheries Act*, and the *Sustainable Fisheries Framework* policy suite, and mandate commitments to the Blue Economy Strategy and reconciliation with First Nations.

For more information on Canada's marine conservation tools: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/conservation/plan/index-eng.html>

For more information on relevant legislation, please see the following:

Marine refuges and other measures under the *Fisheries Act*: <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/f-14/page-1.html>

Marine Protected Areas - *Oceans Act*: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/O-2.4/>

National Wildlife Areas - *Canada Wildlife Act*: <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/w-9/page-1.html>

National Marine Conservation Areas (Reserves) - *National Marine Conservation Areas Act*: https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/annualstatutes/2002_18/page-1.html

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An overview map of established federal marine conservation initiatives in the Pacific Region is provided in Figure 5–1, followed by a table outlining relevant details by initiative – both established and in progress. Many initiatives are types of marine protected areas (MPAs) or marine refuges (OECMs). See site-specific regulations and management plans for any restrictions on activities, or Fishery Notices where applicable.

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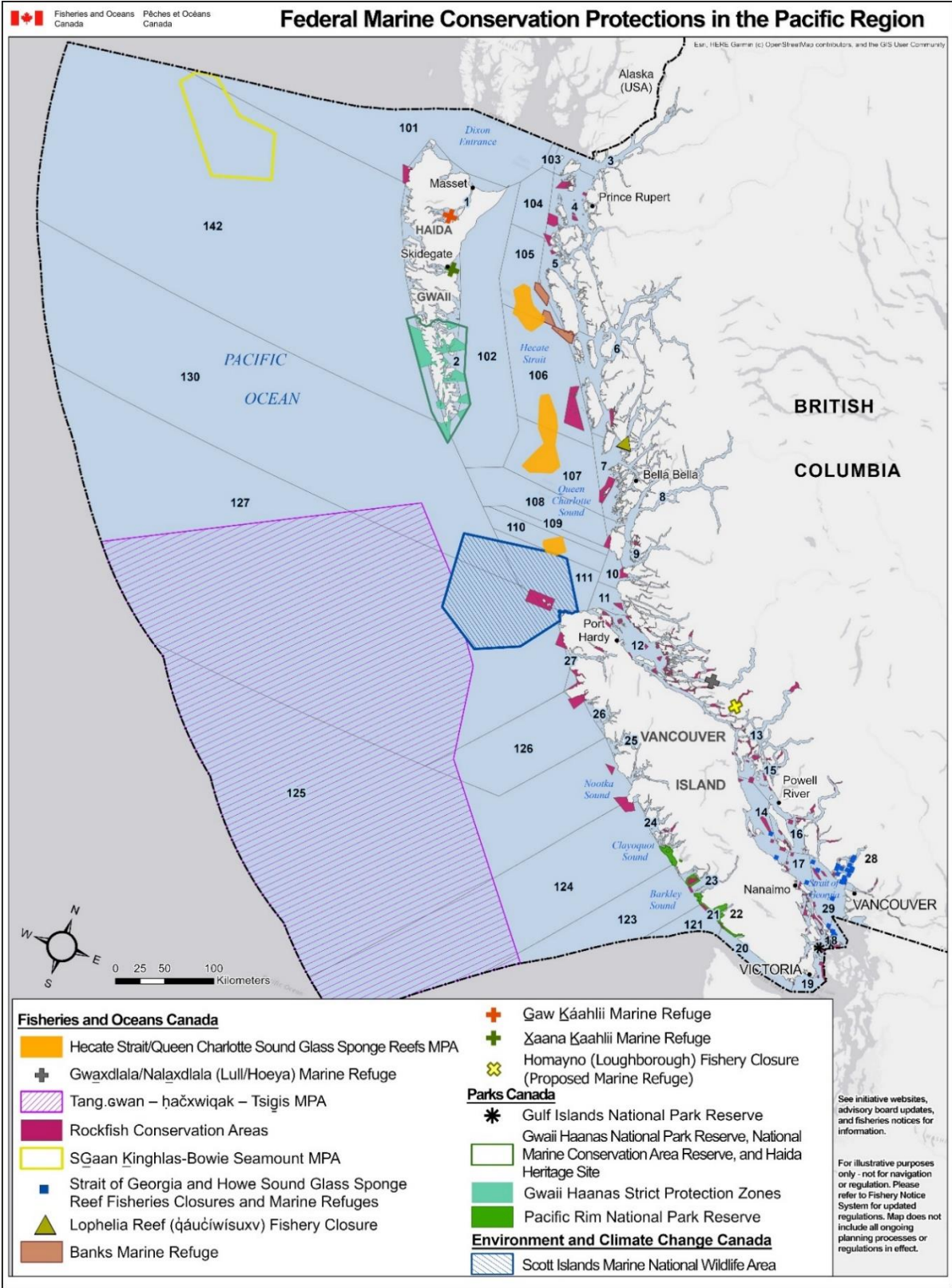


Figure 5–I: Pacific Fisheries Management Areas and Federal Marine Conservation Initiatives and Closures

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Table 5–1: Overview and status of Federal Marine Conservation Initiatives in DFO Pacific Region
(see Figure 5-1 map).

Name	Type	Lead	Weblinks	Contact	Fishery Considerations
Fisheries and Oceans Canada, <i>Ocean's Act</i> and <i>Fisheries Act</i>					
Hecate Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound Glass Sponge Reefs Marine Protected Area	MPA	DFO	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/mpa-zpm/hecate-charlotte/index-eng.html	DFO.OceansPacific-OceansPacific.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca	See MPA website and regulations for more details: https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2017-15/index.html In the MPA there are 3 different management zone types: Core Protection Zones, Vertical Adaptive Management Zones and Adaptive Management Zones The entire MPA is closed to commercial bottom-contact fishing activities. Core Protection Zones (CPZ) are closed to anchoring and all fishing activities. Commercial fishing in a Vertical Adaptive Management Zone (VAMZ) is permitted if the fishing is carried out by means of midwater hook and line, troll, seine or gillnet and the gear does not enter a CPZ. Recreational fishing in a VAMZ is permitted if the fishing is carried out by means of midwater hook and line and the gear does not enter a CPZ. For more detail on the fishery closure within the MPA, please review the FN0198 (2017) Fishery Notice.
Kitkatla Inlet Area of Interest (AOI)	MPA	DFO & Gitxaala Nation	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/aoi-si/kitkatla-eng.html	DFO.OceansPacific-OceansPacific.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca	The proposed Kitkatla Inlet MPA was identified in the Network Action Plan (2023). Site Partners are currently in the feasibility assessment stage and working on an approach for advancing future

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					consultation and engagement on the AOI. Discussion of any protection measures and/or permitted activities will occur during the feasibility assessment. No fisheries closures associated with the proposed Kitkatla Inlet MPA are anticipated for the 2026 IFMP / fishing season.
North Coast Fjords Area of Interest (AOI)	MPA	DFO & Gitga'at First Nation, Gitxaala Nation, Haisla Nation	TBD	DFO.OceansPacific-OceansPacific.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca	The proposed North Coast Fjords MPA was identified from a portion of the Caamaño Sound site in the Network Action Plan (2023). Site Partners are currently in the feasibility assessment stage and working on an approach for external consultation and engagement on the AOI. Discussion of any protection measures and/or permitted activities will occur during the feasibility assessment. No fisheries closures associated with the proposed North Coast Fjords MPA are anticipated for the 2026 IFMP / fishing season.
Offshore Haida Gwaii Area of Interest (AOI)	MPA	DFO & Council of the Haida Nation	TBD	DFO.OceansPacific-OceansPacific.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca	The proposed Offshore Haida Gwaii MPA was identified in the Network Action Plan (2023). Site Partners are currently in the feasibility assessment stage and working on an approach for external consultation and engagement on the AOI. • Discussion of any protection measures and/or permitted activities will occur during the feasibility assessment. No fisheries closures associated

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					with the proposed Offshore Haida Gwaii MPA are anticipated for the 2026 IFMP / fishing season.
SGáan Kínghlas-Bowie Seamount Marine Protected Area	MPA	DFO & Council of Haida Nation	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/mpa-zpm/sgaan-kinghlas-bowie/index-eng.html	@DFO.OceansPacific @dfo-mpo.gc.ca	See MPA website and regulations for more details: https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2008-124/ The MPA is closed to all commercial fishing activities. The MPA is also closed to recreational and FSC bottom-contact fishing activities. For more detail on the fishery closures within the MPA, please review the FN0089 (2018) Fisheries Notice.
Tang.gwan – ɥačxwiqak – Tsigis Marine Protected Area Offshore Pacific Seamounts and Vents Closure †	MPA	DFO	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/mpa-zpm/tht/index-eng.html	@DFO.OceansPacific @dfo-mpo.gc.ca	See MPA regulations for more details: Canada Gazette, Part 2, Volume 158, Number 13: Tang.gwan - ɥačxwiqak - Tsigis Marine Protected Area Regulations . The MPA has 3 different management zones: General Zone, Dellwood Zone and Union Zone. Bottom-contact gear is prohibited in the entire MPA. Commercial and recreational fishing using pelagic hook and line gear is allowed in all three of the MPA's zones, provided the gear does not go below a depth of 100 m from the sea surface in the Union or Dellwood Zones, or 500 m from the sea surface in the General Zone. Midwater trawl is allowed in the General Zone, provided the gear does not go below a depth of 500 m from the sea surface and is prohibited in the Union and Dellwood Zones. Fishery Notice for these closures can be found in FN0096 (2025).

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					† Offshore Pacific Seamounts and Vents Closure Variation Orders have been replaced by the Variation Orders for this MPA.
Banks Marine Refuge	Marine refuge	DFO & Gitxaala Nation	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/oecm-amcepz/refuges/banks-eng.html	DFO.PACF-MMCT-OCMGPPA.C.MPO@df-o-mpo.gc.ca	Specific details of the closures and restrictions can be found in Fishery Notices FN0102 and FN0101 (2025). In addition to all RCA closures remaining in effect, as of February 14, 2025, commercial prawn and crab by trap fisheries are closed around western portions of Banks Island, and as of March 4, 2025, recreational prawn and crab by trap fisheries are closed around western portions of Banks Island.
Gaw Káahlíi Marine Refuge	Marine Refuge	DFO & Council of Haida Nation	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/oecm-amcepz/refuges/masset-inlet-embouchure-eng.html	DFO.PACF-MMCT-OCMGPPA.C.MPO@df-o-mpo.gc.ca	Specific details of the closures and restrictions can be found in Fishery Notices FN 0100 and FN0099 (2025). As of February 14, 2025, all commercial fisheries are indefinitely closed in portions of Gaw Káahlíi (Masset Inlet). As of March 4, 2025, all recreational fisheries, except shore-based angling, are closed in portions of Gaw Káahlíi (Masset Inlet).
GSR-RCA Project: Proposed sites in Howe Sound and Jervis Inlet*	<i>Proposed</i> Marine Refuges	DFO	TBD	DFO.PACF-MMCT-OCMGPPA.C.MPO@df-o-mpo.gc.ca	DFO is proposing multiple sites as marine refuges. Input was sought on proposed fisheries closures at these sites in fall 2025. Feedback received will inform the development of a new proposal that is anticipated to be released for review and feedback in fall 2026.
Gwaxdlala/Nalaxdlala (Lull/Hoeya) Marine Refuge	Marine Refuge	DFO & Mamalilikulla First Nation	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/oecm-amcepz/refuges/banks-eng.html	DFO.PACF-MMCT-OCMGPPA.C.MPO@df-o-mpo.gc.ca	Specific details of the closures and restrictions can be found in Fishery Notice FN0118 (2023). The Gwaxdlala/Nalaxdlala (Lull/Hoeya) marine refuge is

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			es/lull-hoeya-eng.html		closed to all fisheries (commercial, recreational and FSC fishing activities).
Homayno Proposed Marine Refuge*	<i>Proposed Marine Refuge</i>	DFO & Wei Wai Kum First Nation	TBD	DFO.PACF MMCT-OCMGPPA C.MPO@df o-mpo.gc.ca	Specific details of the closures and restrictions can be found in Fishery Notices FN0330, FN0336 and FN0331 (2026). DFO has established fisheries closures in the proposed Homayno Marine Refuge within portions of Heydon and Loughborough Inlet. As of April 1, 2026, commercial fisheries for crab by trap, prawn/shrimp by trap, salmon by seine and salmon by gillnet are closed in the northern portions (existing RCA closures remain in effect) and commercial fisheries for crab by trap, salmon by seine, salmon by gillnet, and salmon by troll are closed in the southern portions of the proposed marine refuge. As of April 1, 2026, recreational fisheries for all invertebrates are closed in the northern portions (existing RCA closures remain in effect) and recreational fisheries for salmon via angling and all invertebrates (except prawn/shrimp by trap) are closed in the southern portions of the proposed marine refuge.
Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound Glass Sponge Reef (GSR) Marine Refuges*	Marine Refuges	DFO	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/ceccsr-cerceef/closures-fermetures-eng.html	DFO.PACF MMCT-OCMGPPA C.MPO@df o-mpo.gc.ca	Specific details of the site descriptions, closures, and restrictions for individual sites can be found in Fishery Notices FN0571 (2015), FN0205 (2019), FN0039 (2022), and FN0521 (2026)*.

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					Sites listed in FN0571 (2015) restrict all commercial, recreational and Indigenous food, social and ceremonial (FSC) bottom-contact fishing activities, including: • prawn and crab by trap • shrimp by trawl • groundfish by midwater and bottom trawl • groundfish by hook and line Sites listed in FN0205 (2019) and FN0039 (2022)/FN0521 (2026)* restrict all commercial, recreational and Indigenous food, social and ceremonial (FSC) bottom-contact fishing activities, as listed above and the use of downrigger gear in recreational salmon trolling via licence condition.
Xaana Kaahlii Marine Refuge	Marine Refuge	DFO & Council of Haida Nation	https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/oecm-amcepz/refuges/skidegate-inlet-embouchure-eng.html	DFO.PACF MMCT-OCMGPPA C.MPO@df o-mpo.gc.ca	Specific details of the closures and restrictions can be found in Fishery Notices FN0100 and FN0099 (2025). As of February 14, 2025, all commercial fisheries are indefinitely closed in portions of Xaana Kaahlii (Skidegate Inlet). As of March 4, 2025, all recreational fisheries, except shore-based angling, are closed in portions of Xaana Kaahlii (Skidegate Inlet).
Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs)	RCA	DFO	https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fmgp/maps-cartes/rca-acs/index-eng.html	DFO.PACF MMCT-OCMGPPA C.MPO@df o-mpo.gc.ca	There are 162 Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) in British Columbia, covering roughly 4,350km² of Canadian Pacific waters. These areas are closed to a range of recreational and commercial fisheries to protect inshore rockfish and their habitat. See website for details on individual RCAs by area.

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Lophelia Reef (q̓ăuč̓w̓isuxv)	Fishery Closure	DFO, Kitasoo Xai'xais and Heiltsu k First Nations	https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=vi&ID=296056&ID=allhttps://www.canada.ca/en/fisheries-oceans/news/2024/03/fisheries-and-oceans-canada-closes-the-first-and-only-known-live-coral-reef-in-pacific-canada-to-all-commercial-and-recreational-bottom-contact-fis.html	DFO.PACF.MMCT-OCMGPPA.C.MPO@dfompo.gc.ca	Specific details of the closures and restrictions of this site can be found in Fishery Notice FN0085 (2024). The Lophelia Reef is closed to all bottom-contact commercial and recreational fisheries (including midwater trawl).
Parks Canada, National Marine Conservation Areas Act					
Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site	NMCAR	Parks Canada	https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/bc/gwaiihaanas	gwaiihaanas@pc.gc.ca	Refer to Fishery Notice FN 0536 (2019), released June 13, 2019 for a detailed description of the Strict Protection Zones. There is "no extraction or harvesting by anyone of the resources of the lands and non-tidal waters of the Archipelago for or in support of commercial enterprise" (s3.3). Contact the Gwaii Haanas administration office: 1-877-559-8818
Proposed Miyaltwa Ha'lidzogn	Proposed NMCAR	Parks Canada	https://parks.canada.ca/amm	nmca-pacific-	An Establishment Agreement for this site was finalized in May 2026. The focus for the site will now

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hoon National Marine Conservation Area Reserve*			nmca/cnamnc-cnnmca/coteceentrale-centralcoast	amnc@pc.gc.ca	shift to implementation and will involve setting up an advisory committee comprised of representatives from a range of marine sectors and interests, including the commercial fishing sector. This work is anticipated to begin in fall / winter 2026 / 2027. No fisheries closures associated with the Central Coast NMCAR will occur in the 2026 IFMP / fishing season.
Gulf Islands National Park Reserve	National Park marine area	Parks Canada	https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/bc/gulf	gulfinfo@pc.gc.ca	Park regulations can be found at: Canada National Parks Act
Pacific Rim National Park Reserve	National park marine area	Parks Canada	https://www.parks.gc.ca/en/pn-np/bc/pacificrim	Pacrim.info@pc.gc.ca	Park regulations can be found at: Canada National Parks Act
Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canada Wildlife Act					
Proposed marine National Wildlife Area at Nearshore Haida Gwaii	<i>Proposed Marine National Wildlife Area</i>	ECCC & Council of Haida Nation	TBD	RNFMilieu MarinSCFP AC-CWSPACMarineNWA@ec.gc.ca	The marine NWA was identified in the Network Action Plan (2023) as a potential tool to support meeting some of Network Goals and Objectives for the Nearshore Haida Gwaii Site. CHN and ECCC are currently advancing a feasibility assessment and engaging with stakeholders through the Nearshore Haida Gwaii Advisory Committee (NHG AC). NHG AC is made up of a range of sector stakeholders, such as commercial fisheries, and the Haida Gwaii Integrated Advisory Committee. In 2026, the NHG AC will be reviewing and providing advice on draft Overview reports (Ecological, Mineral & Energy,

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					and Socio-Economic Overview). Discussion of potential protection measures and/or permitted activities will occur during the Regulatory Strategy phase. No fisheries closures associated with the Nearshore Haida Gwaii site are anticipated for the 2026 IFMP / fishing season.
Scott Islands Marine National Wildlife Area*	Marine National Wildlife Area	ECCC	https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/national-wildlife-areas/locations/scott-islands-marine.html	DFO.PACF.MMCT-OCMGPPA.C.MPO@dfompo.gc.ca Enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca mfis-sinwa@ec.gc.ca	The Scott Islands Protected Marine Area regulations can be found at: https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2018-119/index.html Scott Islands marine NWA specific NOTMAR (notice: Annual Edition - Notice - A5E). The most recent consultations on the proposed Scott Islands Biodiversity Protections Regulations occurred in fall 2025. The process to develop regulations is ongoing.
<i>*Indicates ongoing planning process. See initiative websites, advisory board updates, and Fishery Notices for information.</i>					

5.2.3 MARINE PLANNING AND INTEGRATED OCEANS MANAGEMENT IN CANADA

DFO undertakes marine planning, management and knowledge coordination to fulfill Canada's *Oceans Act* commitment to integrated ocean management.

Key marine planning and management tools in the Pacific region include the Canada Marine Planning Atlas (Pacific), the Marine Spatial Planning Framework for the Southern B.C., and the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network Action Plan for the Northern Shelf Bioregion. The Southern B.C. MSP Framework was developed with collaboration from the Province of British Columbia, other Federal departments, and Indigenous groups. The Northern Shelf Bioregion MPA Network Action Plan was endorsed by a trilateral partnership of First Nations, the Province of British Columbia, and the Government of Canada in February 2023.

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As well, in June 2024, 17 First Nations, the Government of Canada, the Province of B.C. and Coast Funds announce the signing and launch of the Great Bear Sea Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) agreement. The initiative supports the implementation of the Northern Shelf Bioregion MPA Network Action Plan.

The Canada Marine Planning Atlas for Pacific Region is available online at: [Canada Marine Planning Atlas \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/atlantique/atlantique-atlas/).

The Southern B.C. Marine Spatial Planning framework is available online at: [Southern British Columbia Marine Spatial Planning Framework](https://www.southernbc.ca/marine-spatial-planning-framework/).

The MPA Network Action Plan for the Northern Shelf Bioregion is available online at: https://mpanetwork.ca/nap/MPA_Network-Action-Plan_web.pdf, with a summary available at: [MPA Network BC Northern Shelf Initiative \(2023\) Network Action Plan – a summary](#).

The Great Bear Sea Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) Initiative announcement and related links can be found at:

[Protecting more of our marine ecosystems together, for future generations | Prime Minister of Canada](#).

5.3 CONSERVATION OF SPECIES THAT MAY BE AFFECTED BY SALMON FISHERIES

5.3.1 ROCKFISH

For 2026-2027, the management objective for inshore rockfish species (which include Yelloweye, Quillback, Copper, China, and Tiger) is to continue conservation strategies that will ensure stock rebuilding over time. **These inshore rockfish species are currently non-retention in the commercial salmon troll fisheries.**

In 2002, an inshore rockfish conservation strategy was established with initial measures introduced for recreational and commercial fisheries. The strategy addresses four areas under the fisheries management and stock assessment regime:

- a) Protect a part of inshore rockfish populations from harvest through the use of rockfish conservation areas.
- b) Collect information on total fishery mortalities through improved catch monitoring programs.
- c) Reduce harvests to levels that are less than the estimates of natural mortality (i.e. less than two percent).

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- d) Improve the ability to assess the status of inshore rockfish populations and monitor changes in abundance.

5.3.1.1 ROCKFISH CONSERVATION AREAS

There are 162 Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) in British Columbia, covering roughly 4,350 km² of the Canadian Pacific Coast. These areas are closed to a range of recreational and commercial fisheries to protect inshore rockfish and their habitat.

Canada uses a variety of legislative tools for marine conservation, depending on the lead federal department or agency and their coastal mandates. As goals, objectives, and management plans are finalized for these initiatives, DFO's management of fisheries will be adapted as appropriate, in consultation with interested parties through initiative-specific consultations and annual Integrated Fisheries Management processes. The implementation of spatial marine conservation initiatives is informed by considerations under the *Oceans Act*, *Fisheries Act* and the Sustainable Fisheries Policy suite, and mandate commitments to the Blue Economy Strategy and Reconciliation with First Nations.

For more information on Canada's marine conservation tools: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/conservation/plan/index-eng.html>

For more information see relevant legislation:

Marine refuges and other measures - *Fisheries Act*: <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/f-14/page-1.html>

Marine Protected Areas - *Oceans Act*: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/O-2.4/>

National Wildlife Areas - *Canada Wildlife Act*: <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/w-9/page-1.html>

National Marine Conservation Areas (Reserves): *National Marine Conservation Areas Act*: https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/annualstatutes/2002_18/page-1.html

5.3.1.2 REBUILDING PLAN - YELLOWEYE ROCKFISH (INSIDE STOCK)

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has developed "A Fisheries Decision-Making Framework Incorporating the Precautionary Approach" (PA Policy) under the auspices of the Sustainable Fisheries Framework. It outlines the departmental methodology for applying the precautionary approach (PA) to Canadian fisheries. A key component of the PA Policy requires that when a stock has declined to or below a limit reference point (LRP), a rebuilding plan must be in place with the aim of having a high probability of the stock growing above the LRP within a reasonable timeframe.

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In addition, under section 6.2 of the Fish Stocks provisions (FSP) in the amended *Fisheries Act* (2019), rebuilding plans must be developed and implemented for prescribed major fish stocks that have declined to or below their LRP. This legislated requirement is supported by section 70 of the Fishery (General) Regulations (FGR), which set out the required contents of those rebuilding plans and establish a timeline for each rebuilding plan's development.

The purpose of a rebuilding plan is to identify the main rebuilding objectives for any species below its LRP (i.e., in the "critical zone" of the PA Policy), as well as the management measures that will be used to achieve these objectives. The plan provides a common understanding of the basic "rules" for rebuilding the stock. At the time of prescription, the Inside stock of Yelloweye Rockfish was estimated to be above its LRP with a high probability and thus is subject to 6.1 of the Fisheries Act and regulatory requirements.

The objectives and measures outlined in the Inside Yelloweye Rockfish rebuilding plan are applicable until the stock has reached its rebuilding target. Once the stock is determined to be at the target, the stock(s) will be managed through the standard Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) or other fishery management process in order to fulfil the requirements of the FSP. Management measures outlined in this rebuilding plan are mandatory, and may be modified or further measures added if they fail to result in stock rebuilding.

More information on the Rebuilding Plan for the Inside Yelloweye Rockfish stock is available in Appendix 9 of the Groundfish IFMP, which can be found here: [Pacific Region integrated fisheries management plan, groundfish, effective February 21, 2025](#)

5.3.2 MARINE MAMMALS

Addressing conservation concerns for marine mammals requires taking steps to reduce the harm and mortality from key threats, including those associated with fishing activity and that strengthen the collection and quality of data on any interactions. To support this, commercial fishing licences now include a Condition of Licence for Marine Mammals that sets out mitigation measures and reporting requirements. This includes mandatory reporting of all interactions with marine mammals, prohibition to disturb marine mammals and adherence to minimum approach distances under the Marine Mammal Regulations, Section 7, prohibition of encirclement of marine mammals in purse seine fisheries, and policy prohibition against the lethal removal of nuisance seals to protect fishing gear.

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5.3.3 MARINE MAMMAL, TURTLE AND BASKING SHARK INCIDENT AND SIGHTINGS REPORTS

5.3.3.1 INCIDENT REPORTING

Marine Mammal Incident Reporting Hotline

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is responsible for assisting marine mammals and sea turtles in distress. If your vessel strikes a whale, or if you observe an entangled, sick, injured, distressed, or dead marine mammal or sea turtle in BC waters, please contact the Observe, Record, Report line (1-800-465-4336) immediately, or for immediate assistance you can also hail the Canadian Coast Guard on VHF Channel 16.:

What to report:

- Your name and contact information
- Date and time of incident
- Location: Latitude/Longitude coordinates, landmarks
- Species
- Animal alive/dead (animal condition)
- Nature of injury and supporting details (if possible)
- Pictures/Video taken



Best practices to reduce entanglement and reporting an incident... <https://www.pac.gc.ca/mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/mammals-mammiferes/whales-baleines/docs/entanglements-empetrements-pub-eng.html>

5.3.3.2 SIGHTING REPORTING

Fisheries and Oceans Canada appreciates your assistance in tracking the sightings of live cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises; note this is for healthy animals, the distress hotline is noted above), sea turtles and basking sharks. While there are many whale species found in Pacific Canadian waters, sightings of basking sharks and leatherback sea turtles are infrequent. The collection of sighting data is useful to scientists in determining population size and species distribution, and aids in recovery efforts under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA).

To report whale or turtle sightings, contact the Ocean Wise Sightings Network:

Toll free: 1-866-I-SAW-ONE (1-866-472-9663)

Email: sightings@ocean.org

Website: <https://ocean.org/action/send-a-sighting-save-a-whale/>

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App: [WhaleReport](#)

To report basking shark sightings, contact the Basking Shark Sightings Network:

Toll free: 1-877-50-SHARK (1-877-507-4275)

Email: sharks@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Website: www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/SharkSightings

A species identification guide for sharks is available at <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/40757067.pdf>.

Guides to distinguish between pinnipeds, emphasizing differences between Steller and California Sea Lions can be found here:

https://oceanorg.blob.core.windows.net/oceanorg/2023/10/Pinniped_IDGuide-email-2022.pdf

https://wildwhales.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/BCCSN_IDGuide_Pinniped_email.pdf

and between Sea and River Otters:

https://oceanorg.blob.core.windows.net/oceanorg/2023/10/Otters_IDGuide-ffp-2022.pdf

https://wildwhales.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/BCCSN_IDGuide_Otters_vertical_4.pdf

5.3.4 SEABIRDS

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is looking for your help to measure gill net fishing's impact on local seabird populations.

Populations of a number of seabird species around the world have declined in recent years; seabird bycatch is a part of the reason.

Seabird bycatch has been reported in all types of fisheries in BC and in fisheries in Alaska and Washington State. However, the number of local seabirds getting entangled in gill nets as a result of the BC salmon gill net fishery is not well known.

ECCC wants to know how, when and where gill net fishing may impact local seabirds and to find ways to reduce impacts. ECCC, with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, fishermen, First Nations, non-government organizations, and other coastal communities, have a program to answer these questions. Without this information, it will be difficult to determine if there is a significant impact. Should impacts be determined this information helps support solutions that benefit both the fishery and healthy bird populations.

To help us, we would like to be informed about any dead birds found or reported in gill nets and/or found floating dead on fishing grounds. Please report all incidents to our 24-hour reporting line: 1-866-431-BIRD (2473).

For additional information, please contact:

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Laurie Wilson

Wildlife Biologist, Environment and Climate Change Canada

Canadian Wildlife Service, Delta, BC

Telephone: (604) 862-8817

Email: laurie.wilson@ec.gc.ca

5.3.5 SHARKS

Out of the fourteen shark species in Canadian Pacific waters, three species are listed under SARA. The Basking Shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*) is listed as Endangered, and the Bluntnose Sixgill Shark (*Hexanchus griseus*) and Tope Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*) are listed as species of Special Concern. In Canadian waters, the primary threats to shark species have been identified as bycatch and entanglement.

To address the conservation concerns with shark species, it is important that measures are taken to reduce the mortality of sharks resulting from these primary threats. As such, commercial fishing licences have been amended to include a Condition of Licence for Basking Sharks that specify mitigation measures in accordance with SARA permitting requirements.

Additionally, a Code of Conduct for Shark Encounters and Code of Conduct for Basking Shark Encounters have been developed to reduce the mortality of Basking Shark, Bluntnose Sixgill Shark, Tope Shark, and other Canadian Pacific shark species resulting from entanglement and bycatch in commercial and recreational fisheries, and aquaculture. These guidelines include boat operation procedures during visual encounters with Basking Sharks and best practices for handling Canadian Pacific shark species during entanglement encounters.

These documents have been posted online and can be found at the following URL links:

Code of conduct for sharks: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/publications/sharks/coc/coc-sharks/index-eng.html>

Code of conduct for Basking Sharks: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/publications/sharks/coc/coc-basking/index-eng.html>

5.3.6 SARA LISTED AND COSEWIC ASSESSED SPECIES

In the Pacific Region, the following SARA-listed species may be encountered by salmon fisheries:

5.3.6.1 SARA LISTED SPECIES

BIRDS

- [Ancient Murrelet](#) – Special Concern

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- [Marbled Murrelet](#) – Threatened
- [Black-footed Albatross](#) – Special Concern
- [Short-tailed Albatross](#) – Threatened
- [Pink-footed Shearwater](#) – Endangered
- [Cassin Auklet](#) – Special Concern

FISH

- [Basking Shark, Pacific population](#) – Endangered
- [Bluntnose Sixgill Shark](#) – Special Concern
- [Bull Trout](#) - South Coast population – Special Concern
- [Green Sturgeon](#) – Special Concern
- [Longspine Thornyhead](#) – Special Concern
- [Mountain Sucker \(Pacific populations\)](#) - Special Concern
- [Rougheye Rockfish Types I & II](#) – Special Concern
- [Tope Shark](#) – Special Concern
- [White Sturgeon](#) – Upper Fraser River population – Endangered
- [White Sturgeon](#) – Nechako River Population – Endangered
- Yelloweye Rockfish, Pacific Ocean [inside](#) waters and [outside waters](#) populations – Special Concern (re-assessed by COSEWIC as Threatened in 2020)

MAMMALS

- [Blue Whale, Pacific population](#) – Endangered
- [Fin Whale, Pacific population](#) – Threatened (re-assessed by COSEWIC as Special Concern in 2019)
- [Grey Whale – Eastern North Pacific Population](#) – Special Concern (reassessed and split into two populations by COSEWIC in 2017: Northern Pacific Migratory, assessed as Not at Risk, and Pacific Coast Feeding Group, assessed as Endangered)
- [Harbour Porpoise, Pacific Ocean population](#) – Special Concern
- [Humpback Whale, North Pacific population](#) – Special Concern
- Killer Whale, Northeast Pacific – [northern resident population](#) – Threatened
- Killer Whale, Northeast Pacific – [southern resident population](#) – Endangered
- Killer Whale, Northeast Pacific – [offshore population](#) – Threatened
- Killer Whale, Northeast Pacific – [transient population](#) – Threatened
- [North Pacific Right Whale](#) – Endangered
- [Sea Otter](#) – Special Concern
- [Sei Whale, Pacific population](#) – Endangered
- [Steller Sea Lion](#) – Special Concern

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REPTILES

- [Leatherback Sea Turtle](#) – Endangered

5.3.6.2 COSEWIC ASSESSED SPECIES

Marine or anadromous species assessed by COSEWIC that are currently under consideration for listing under SARA include:

FISH

- [Bocaccio](#) – assessed as Endangered
- [Bull Trout](#) – Pacific population – assessed as Special Concern
- [Darkblotched Rockfish](#) – assessed as Special Concern
- [Eulachon](#) – Fraser River Designatable Unit (DU) – assessed as Endangered
- [Eulachon](#) – Central Pacific Coast DU – assessed as Endangered
- [Eulachon](#) – Nass/Skeena Rivers DU – assessed as Special Concern
- [North Pacific Spiny Dogfish](#) – assessed as Special Concern
- [Salmon, Chinook](#) (Okanagan population) – assessed as Endangered; engagement and consultation completed in 2023
- [Salmon, Coho](#) (Interior Fraser population) – assessed as Threatened; DFO management scenarios in development
- [Salmon, Sockeye](#) (Sakinaw population) – assessed as Endangered; engagement and consultation completed in 2023
- Salmon, Sockeye (19 Fraser River DUs between [2017](#) and [2021](#) assessments) – assessed as Endangered (10DUs), Threatened (2 DUs), Special Concern (7 DUs); DFO management scenarios in development
- Salmon, Chinook (21 Southern BC DUs between [2018](#) and [2020](#) assessments) - assessed as Endangered (12 DUs), Threatened (7 DUs), Special Concern (2 DU); DFO management scenarios in development
- Steelhead, Interior Fraser ([Chilcotin](#) & [Thompson](#) populations [2 DUs]) – assessed as Endangered (2 DUs); DFO and BC coordinating updated science information
- [Quillback Rockfish](#) – assessed as Threatened
- [White Sturgeon](#)- Lower Fraser River DU - assessed as Threatened
- White Sturgeon – Mid-Fraser Nationally Significant Population – assessed as Endangered as part of the Upper Fraser DU

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- [Northern Fur Seal](#) – assessed as Threatened
- [Grey Whale, Pacific Coast Feeding Group population](#) – assessed as Endangered (this population represents a portion of the currently listed Special Concern Eastern North Pacific Grey Whale population)

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- [Grey Whale, Western Pacific population](#) – assessed as Endangered

5.4 KILLER WHALE

5.4.1 RESIDENT KILLER WHALE

Two distinct populations of Resident Killer Whales, known as the Northern and Southern Residents, occupy the waters off the west coast of British Columbia. These two populations have overlapping ranges but are acoustically, genetically, and culturally distinct from each other. Since 2003, the Northern and Southern Resident Killer Whales have been listed in Schedule 1 of SARA, as threatened and endangered respectively. The “Recovery Strategy for the Northern and Southern Resident Killer Whales (*Orcinus orca*) in Canada” was finalized and published on the Species at Risk Public Registry in 2008, amended in 2011 to clarify critical habitat attributes, and amended in 2018 to include two additional areas protected under SARA Critical Habitat Order.

The principal threats identified in the Recovery Strategy

(https://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual_sara/files/plans/Rs-ResidentKillerWhale-v00-2018Aug-Eng.pdf) for Northern Resident Killer Whales (NRKW) and Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) include: reduced prey availability, environmental contaminants, and physical and acoustic disturbance. An additional emerging threat, vessel strikes, was identified during a science-based review (https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2018/mpo-dfo/Fs49-12-2-2017-eng.pdf) of recovery actions for SRKW.

The Action Plan (https://www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual_sara/files/plans/Ar-ResidentKillerWhale-v00-2017Mar-Eng.pdf) identifies 98 recovery measures to support recovery of Resident Killer Whales. These measures were developed to support recovery and to address the three primary threats to the population – including prey availability.

5.4.2 SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALES – MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO SUPPORT PREY AVAILABILITY, AND REDUCE PHYSICAL AND ACOUSTIC DISTURBANCE

The Government of Canada is taking important steps to protect and recover the Southern Resident Killer Whale population, in keeping with direction provided in SARA recovery documents. In May 2018, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard and Minister of Environment and Climate Change determined the Southern Resident Killer Whale population faces imminent threats to its survival and recovery. Since 2018, the Government of Canada, with input from the Indigenous Multi-Nation Group, Indigenous and Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group, and Technical Working Groups, as

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well as consultation with First Nations, stakeholders, and the public, has implemented a number of measures aimed at increasing prey availability for Southern Resident Killer Whales – particularly Chinook Salmon – and reducing threats related to physical and acoustic disturbance with a focus in key foraging areas within Southern Resident Killer Whale critical habitat. These measures include fishing closures, Vessel Restricted Zones (previously Interim Sanctuary Zones), Speed Restricted Zones for vessels, vessel avoidance distances and a number of voluntary measures in the presence of killer whales. <https://www.canada.ca/southern-resident-killer-whales>

The fishery management measures for 2026 include area-based fishery closures for recreational and commercial salmon fisheries around Swiftsure Bank (portions of Area 21 and Subareas 20-1, 121-1, and 121-2) from July 15th until October 31st; the Strait of Juan de Fuca (portions of Subareas 20-4 and 20-5) from August 1st until October 31st; Southern Gulf Islands (Subarea 18-9 and portions of Subareas 18-2, 18-4, and 18-5) from first confirmed presence of the Southern Resident Killer Whale in the area after May 1st until November 30th; and near the mouth of the Fraser River (portion of Subarea 29-3) from August 1st until September 30th. Details will be provided via Fishery Notices and are available on the [2026 Southern Resident Killer Whale management measures website here: 2026 management measures to protect Southern Resident killer whales | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada](#).

Similar to previous years, DFO is continuing the fishing closure protocol for the Southern Gulf Islands commercial and recreational salmon fisheries where fishery closures are triggered to be implemented by the first confirmed presence of the Southern Resident Killer Whale in the area. The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority Enhancing Cetacean and Observation (ECHO) Program, working closely with its local partners, and the DFO Whale Tracking Network began monitoring the area on May 1st. These closures do not apply to individuals or vessels being used to fish for food, social, or ceremonial purposes, or for domestic purposes pursuant to a treaty, under a licence issued the Aboriginal Communal Fishing License Regulations.

The Government of Canada is introducing an increased approach distance for the Southern Resident Killer Whale. Beginning June 1st, 2026, under Transport Canada's Interim Order, all vessels, including motorized and human-powered, must stay 1,000 metres away from the Southern Resident Killer Whale in southern BC coastal waters between Campbell River and Ucluelet, including Barkley Sound and Howe Sound. The approach distance for other killer whale populations in Pacific Canadian waters will remain at 200 metres.

Transport Canada is continuing several vessel management measures in Southern Resident Killer Whale critical habitat to reduce physical and acoustic disturbance in key areas important to the population. These measures are in effect from June 1st to November 30th, 2026:

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- Mandatory Speed Restricted Zones at Swiftsure Bank: All vessels must travel at 10 knots or less.
- Mandatory Vessel Restricted Zones off Pender and Saturna Islands: Boating and fishing are prohibited, with exceptions for emergencies, vessels engaged in Indigenous food, social, and ceremonial fisheries, and Indigenous Peoples exercising existing rights.
- Voluntary Speed Reduction in Tumbo Channel: Vessels are encouraged to travel 10 knots or less, when safe to do so.

The Government of Canada is asking vessel operators to respect the following voluntary measures year-round and in all Canadian Pacific waters:

- Stop fishing (do not haul gear where appropriate) within 1,000 metres of killer whales and let them pass;
- Reduce speed to less than 7 knots when within 1,000 metres of the nearest killer whale;
- When safe to do so, turn off echo sounders and fish finders; and
- Place engine in neutral idle and allow animals to pass if your vessel is not in compliance with the approach distance regulations.
- Reduce speed to less than 10 knots when within the voluntary Speed Reduction Zone in Tumbo Channel off Saturna Island.

For more information on the best ways to help whales while on the water, when on both sides of the border, please visit: bewhalewise.org.

For more information regarding the Southern Resident Killer Whale management measures to support recovery, please contact the Marine Mammal Team (DFO.SRKW-ERS.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) or visit www.canada.ca/southern-resident-killer-whales.

5.4.3 DEPREDATION BY KILLER WHALE

Depredation (the removal of fish from fishing gear) by killer whales and sperm whales has been reported by groundfish longline, salmon troll, and recreational harvesters in British Columbia, Washington and Alaska.

Depredation is a learned behaviour that can spread throughout whale social groups. Once established, depredation is nearly impossible to eliminate. It is critical that harvesters do not encourage this learning by allowing whales to associate obtaining fish with fishing activity. Encouraging this behaviour will quickly lead to significant losses for harvesters. Depredation in commercial fisheries can also lead to increased likelihood of entanglement or injury to marine mammals.

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The most important approach to prevent this from spreading is by NOT feeding whales directly or indirectly and not hauling gear in the vicinity of killer whales and sperm whales. It is prohibited to feed or disturb marine mammals under Canada's *Marine Mammal Regulations*, Section 7, including by use of acoustic deterrents. Typically killer whales pass quickly through an area allowing fishing to resume. It is also recommended that you advise other fish harvesters in the area if you encounter depredation. Further information and tips on avoiding depredation events can be found in the DFO Marine Mammal Bulletin: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/mammals-mammiferes/whales-baleines/docs/depredation-whales-baleines-eng.html>

A useful depredation handout can be found at the Ocean Wise website: [https://oceanorg.blob.core.windows.net/oceanorg/2024/02/Depredation Commercial 1-pager-ffp.pdf](https://oceanorg.blob.core.windows.net/oceanorg/2024/02/Depredation%20Commercial%201-pager-ffp.pdf)

If you experience depredation by whales, please report the incident by email DFO.PacificMarineMammals-PacificMarineMammals.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca, or by calling 1-800-465-4336 or by reporting accidental contact through the marine mammal interaction form: [Fish-Harvester-Form-Eng.pdf \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](#). Reporting all incidents will assist DFO and fish harvesters in understanding this problem and help in developing strategies to avoid it.

5.5 U.S. MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT FISH AND FISH PRODUCT IMPORT PROVISIONS

In 2016, the U.S. published new regulations (80 FR 54390) pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act which focus on the reduction of marine mammal bycatch in foreign commercial fishing operations. These regulations require harvesting nations that export fish and fish products to the U.S. to demonstrate that their marine mammal protection measures are comparable to U.S. standards. This includes prohibiting the intentional mortality or serious injury of marine mammals in the course of commercial fisheries and mandatory reporting of marine mammal bycatch, monitoring programs and management/mitigation measures where appropriate.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued its most recent [Compatibility Findings Determinations for Harvesting Nations](#) in 2025. All Canadian exempt and export fisheries were determined comparable in effectiveness to the U.S. regulatory program ensuring continued access to U.S. markets when the important provisions came into full effect on January 1, 2026.

DFO will continue to share updates about the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act Fish and Fish Product Import Provisions to ensure continued access to US markets. For additional

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information, please contact DFO's Marine Mammal Unit DFO.PacificMarineMammals-PacificMarineMammals.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

5.6 MARINE MAMMAL REGULATIONS

The *Marine Mammal Regulations* provide direction on conservation and protection of marine mammals, provide guidance for recovery of at-risk species under the *Species at Risk Act*, and set out provisions related to reducing human disturbance of marine mammals (e.g., viewing of marine mammals) and mandatory reporting requirements in the case there is accidental contact with a marine mammal and a vessel or fishing gear. These regulations were amended in 2018 and specify mandatory requirements to reduce disturbance of marine mammals.

As per section 7(2) of the *Marine Mammal Regulations*, disturbance is defined as a number of human actions, including:

- Feeding, swimming or interacting with a marine mammal;
- Moving a marine mammal (or enticing/causing them to move);
- Separating a marine mammal from its group or going between them and a calf;
- Trapping a marine mammal or its group between a vessel and the shore, or between a vessel and other vessels; and
- Tagging or marking a marine mammal.

Vessels are required to maintain a minimum approach distance of:

- 100 metres for whales, dolphins or porpoises;
- 200 metres when whales, dolphins or porpoises are in a resting position or with a calf;

and 200 metres from all killer whales in Pacific Canadian waters, except in southern B.C. coastal waters where a 1,000m approach distance is in effect for the Southern Resident Killer Whale between June 1st, 2026 and May 31st, 2027 pursuant to the Canada Shipping Act Interim Order. As announced in Spring 2023, DFO launched the regulatory process to amend the Marine Mammal Regulations under the Fisheries Act, including amendments to the approach distance for Southern Resident Killer Whales. Please visit the Southern Resident Killer Whale management measures website for more information on the management measures:

<https://www.canada.ca/southern-resident-killer-whales>.

Any operator of a vessel or fishing gear involved in accidental contact with a marine mammal must notify DFO of the incident, as per section 39 of the *Marine Mammal Regulations*. Incident reporting includes:

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- Reporting an injured, stranded, entangled or dead marine mammal to the [BC Marine Mammal Response Network \(Observe, Record, Report\)](#): 1-800-465-4336
- Reporting as bycatch in a logbook
- [Reporting accidental contact through the marine mammal interaction form](#)
- Depredation reporting to DFO by email at Mammals.Marine@dfo-mpo.gc.ca, by calling 1-800-465-4336 or reporting accidental contact through the [marine mammal interaction form](#).

Please note, incidents involving abuse or harassment of a marine mammal should be reported as a [fisheries violation](#), while injured, stranded, entangled or dead marine mammals should be reported to the [BC Marine Mammal Response Network](#) to enable a response if appropriate.

For more information on safe boating behaviour around whales, please visit: [Watching Marine Mammals](#) and [Be Whale Wise](#), or by contacting the DFO Marine Mammal Unit (MMU) (DFO.PacificMarineMammals-PacificMarineMammals.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).

5.7 AQUACULTURE MANAGEMENT

REGULATORY REGIME

In December 2010 the *Pacific Aquaculture Regulations* (PAR) came into effect, giving DFO the authority to govern the management and regulation of aquaculture activities at marine finfish, shellfish, freshwater/land-based and enhancement facilities. The *Aquaculture Activities Regulations* (AAR), which came into force in 2015, further clarify conditions under which aquaculture operators may treat their fish for disease and parasites, as well as deposit organic matter.

DFO also administers the provisions of the *Fishery (General) Regulations* (FGRs) including sections 54 to 57 for licensing introductions and transfers of fish. These provisions include requirements relating to disease. All aquaculture operators must be authorized under the FGRs to bring fish onto the farm site, whether it is on land or in the marine environment. After fish are introduced to the farm site, fish health is regulated through conditions of licence under the PAR and associated health management plans and standard operating procedures.

The Province of British Columbia continues to have authority over land tenures and workplace safety related to aquaculture in BC. New applications, amendments and related referrals are coordinated through FrontCounter BC. More information is available on the BC Government's website: <http://www.frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca>. DFO approves and issues aquaculture licences.

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DFO Aquaculture Management continues to refine aquaculture regulatory requirements through an adaptive management approach. The marine finfish aquaculture licence conditions related to sea lice management have been progressively strengthened since 2020. In the most recent licence review and reissuance, the Department reduced the motile sea lice per salmon threshold from 3.0 to 2.8 in 2025, and again to 2.4 in 2026. Additionally, the amount of time in which licence holders are given to reduce sea lice abundance following a threshold exceedance during the wild juvenile salmon out-migration window was reduced from 42 to 28 days. DFO also made enhancements to marine finfish aquaculture licence conditions in 2024 in the areas of marine mammal interactions and mortality reporting requirements for industry, all of which strengthen protections for wild species and the marine environment, while ensuring aquaculture facilities can operate sustainably.

DFO is developing a responsible plan for salmon aquaculture transition on B.C.'s coast. In September 2024, the draft Salmon Aquaculture Transition Plan (draft Plan) was published and is available here: [Draft Salmon Aquaculture Transition Plan for British Columbia](https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/draft-salmon-aquaculture-transition-plan-british-columbia). The draft Plan has served as the basis for over 120 engagements and consultations in 2024-2025, which provided an understanding of the industry, regional economy, and diverse views of the B.C. salmon aquaculture industry. The Government of Canada is committed to working together with the Province of British Columbia, affected First Nations, coastal communities, and others impacted on the West Coast through the transition: <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/draft-salmon-aquaculture-transition-plan-british-columbia>. A commitment towards introducing Canada's first-ever Aquaculture Act is temporarily on hold while DFO focuses on the transition plan.

DFO requires comprehensive environmental monitoring to be undertaken by the marine finfish industry, and the Department also conducts additional monitoring, audits, and investigations (where warranted) to verify information submitted by licence holders and to support adaptive management. Public reporting of both industry data and DFO audit results ensures transparency and accountability of aquaculture management in BC. Associated reporting can be found on this DFO web page: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/reporting-rapports/index-eng.html>.

There are multiple units within the BC Aquaculture Regulatory Program dedicated to aquaculture compliance, which monitor the activities of industry on an ongoing basis. The program provides compliance oversight and works to ensure the sustainable management of the industry, including impacts to fish and fish habitat, licensing, linkages with national and regional policies, and consultation and communications. For more information or to contact Aquaculture Management staff, please email at DFO.AQFF-AQFF.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

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5.8 FISHING VESSEL SAFETY

Commercial fishing is recognized as a very dangerous activity. Concerns over fishing-related injuries and deaths have prompted DFO to proactively work with Transport Canada and WorkSafe B.C. to ensure coordinated approaches to improving fish harvester safety. See [Appendix 2](#) for more information.

5.9 CATCH MONITORING

DFO released the national *Fishery Monitoring Policy* in 2019, which replaces the regional *Strategic Framework for Fisheries Monitoring and Catch Reporting* in the Pacific Fisheries (2012). The national policy seeks to provide dependable, timely and accessible fishery information through application of a common set of steps used to establish fishery monitoring requirements across fisheries. Available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/fishery-monitoring-surveillance-des-peches-eng.htm>

From 2023 to 2028, Pacific Region is pursuing a project-based approach to implementation of the national Fishery Monitoring Policy, with a focus on the recreational fishery.

Further guidance on implementation of the national Fishery Monitoring policy is available at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/fmp-implementation-psp-mise-en-oeuvre-eng.htm>

For more information on the 2012 Pacific *Strategic Framework for Fisheries Monitoring and Catch Reporting*, please visit:

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/docs/framework-monitoring-cadre-surveillance-eng.html>

The requirement to report catch is a condition of BC First Nations, Recreational, and Commercial license holders. Further details of the aforementioned subjects can be found in the following sections.

5.9.1 FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES CATCH MONITORING AND REPORTING INITIATIVES

5.9.1.1 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FISHERIES

Negotiations to provide economic opportunities to First Nations in Alberni Inlet and the lower Fraser River will be undertaken as in recent years. Economic opportunity fisheries will be conducted under agreements that specify provisions for planning fisheries, allocations, catch reporting requirements as well as roles and responsibilities regarding the management of the

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fishery. The Department's general approach is that Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities are managed using the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery. Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities may be implemented with different times, areas, gears and regulations consistent with the overall management approach for the commercial fishery.

In the lower Fraser, DFO will work with First Nations and commercial harvesters to develop an approach to an integrated commercial fishery based on the principles of transparency, accountability and collaboration. Specific elements of this approach will include defined harvest shares, enhanced catch monitoring and compliance programs, some initial work on a traceability program and improved collaboration amongst harvesters.

5.9.1.2 ABORIGINAL HARVEST MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Since the year 2000, Fisheries and Oceans Canada have been working with First Nations groups to design and develop electronic recording and reporting systems for First Nations FSC catch data, to improve the efficiency and accuracy of reporting FSC catch and other fishing information used by Aboriginal fishery managers and the Department. The software has incorporated recommendations from numerous First Nations members and is based on their reporting requirements within their communities and those required by the Department. The application also has a harvester designation system, allowing First Nations to track FSC effort and harvest as well as other fishing information for their members.

The initiative first utilized a Microsoft Access database used by interested First Nations groups within the Pacific Region, including the BC Interior area, South Coast and the Central Coast. In the late 2000's approximately 34 First Nations groups employed this software application with different success rates, with a few sending FSC data to DFO's Regional catch database. In 2010, work started on compiling all aspects of the 34 current MS Access databases into one (1) system called the Aboriginal Harvest Management System (AHMS) that could be customizable for each Nation's needs. Since 2010, new Nations have been brought onboard each year bringing the total to 24 First Nations currently using AHMS throughout the Region, with up to 5 First Nations still using MS Access databases. AHMS users have the option to export data directly into KREST or submit catch reports via other means. A pilot project was conducted in collaboration between DFO and a First Nation to use a third-party application called GoFormz. This application allows for the collection of data using a variety of devices with built-in validation and workflows to enable the import of data into AHMS. The project has been a success, and the First Nation is currently using it for multiple projects within their fisheries program.

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5.9.1.3 CHINOOK AND COHO CODED WIRE TAG (CWT SAMPLING)

CWT sampling programs in First Nations fisheries are comparable in overall requirements to CWT sampling in commercial and recreational fisheries but may differ in design to recognize differences in First Nations economic, demonstration fisheries and FSC fisheries, and to effectively integrate CWT sampling into First Nations catch monitoring programs. CWT target sample rates are established by the Department to meet bilateral Pacific Salmon Treaty standards for statistically reliable information. The required sample rate is 15-20% of the estimated catch of the fishery to recover a minimum quantity of CWTs from Pacific Salmon Treaty Chinook and Coho CWT Indicator stocks.

In economic and demonstration fisheries, sampling for CWTs is a mandatory catch monitoring requirement in Chinook and Coho retention fisheries that intercept CWT indicator stocks. Independent designated dockside observers (CWT samplers) are required to:

- For vessels that land whole (head-on) Chinook or Coho, examine the entire retained from randomly selected vessels at fish landing stations or processors or systematically sample every fourth or fifth fish retained fish caught. Observers collect specimens that are determined to contain a CWT for subsequent processing by the DFO CWT Lab to extract and read the tag.
- For vessels that remove heads at sea, collect bags of heads or snouts from vessels that removed heads at sea, examine each snout, and collect specimens that are determined to contain CWTs for subsequent processing by the DFO CWT Lab to extract and read the tag.

In FSC fisheries, the success in achieving the 20% target sample rate relies on direct CWT sampling that is integrated into the catch monitoring program for dual fisheries using designated observers or on submissions of Chinook or Coho heads by individual fishers to First Nations fisheries organizations, fishery technicians, guardians, or to a First Nations Salmon Head Depot in the community. Sample rates are commonly called submission rates when the majority of the specimens are fisher-dependent

Essential requirements for the fishery-dependent “head-submission-style” sampling for CWTs are:

- Submission of heads from hatchery-marked (adipose fin-clipped) Chinook and Coho. With mass marking, not all hatchery-marked Chinook and Coho contain a CWT and the missing adipose fin is the only external clue to identify the possibility of an internal

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- Completed head label(s) attached to each head with required catch information including location caught and date caught. For salmon caught together (same date and location), one label may be placed in a sealed bag with multiple heads.
- Provision of catch information by mark status (number of hatchery marked kept Chinook and Coho) to catch monitoring programs.

In head-submission-style programs, if fisher names, Nation, Band or Monitoring Organization is provided, information about the origin of their fish will be provided when CWT dissection results are available.

For additional information about First Nations CWT Sampling Programs:

Salmon Head Recovery Program

Telephone: 1-866-483-9994 (toll-free)

5.9.2 RECREATIONAL FISHERIES CATCH MONITORING

5.9.2.1 CREEL SURVEYS

The Department collects information used to estimate boat based angling harvest of finfish in marine waters and salmon in fresh waters throughout BC using a variety of methods.

Recreational harvesters may be requested by a Fishery Officer or designated DFO representative, such as a creel interviewer, to provide mandatory catch and effort information or biological samples either on the water or at the dock. Approximately 40,000 such interviews are conducted annually to monitor marine and freshwater recreational fishing. Creel surveys for boat-based angling in marine waters are the main source of recreational catch and effort information in the highest effort fisheries.

5.9.2.2 INTERNET RECREATIONAL EFFORT AND CATCH (IREC) REPORTING PROGRAM

Information about the iREC reporting program is available at: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/report-declarez-eng.html>

5.9.2.3 LOGBOOKS

The development of an improved catch monitoring regime, including reporting standards, will continue to be a priority in the management of recreational fisheries. The Department is continuing to work with identified groups – sport fishing guides, fishing lodges, associations – with the assistance of the Sport Fishing Institute of BC to implement logbooks in areas of highest risk or areas conducive to reporting through the use of logbooks. The latter includes

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areas such as the Central Coast, Kyuquot Sound, Port Hardy, Mainland Inlets, and parts of Georgia Strait where there are concentrations of lodges and guided effort.

5.9.2.4 CHINOOK AND COHO CODED WIRE TAG (CWT) SAMPLING

Essential requirements for the sampling for CWTs in recreational fisheries are:

- Fisher-dependent submissions by fishers of heads of hatchery-marked (adipose fin-clipped) Chinook and Coho and Fisher-independent sampling by DFO representatives. With mass marking, not all hatchery-marked Chinook and Coho contain a CWT and the missing adipose fin is the only external clue to identify the possibility of an internal CWT.
- Completed DFO-supplied head label(s) attached to each head with required catch information including location and date caught. For salmon caught together (same location and date), one label may be placed in a sealed bag with multiple heads.
- Provision of catch information by adipose-clip status (number of hatchery marked kept Chinook and Coho) to DFO catch monitoring programs such as creel interviews or iREC.

CWT target sample rates are established by the Department to meet bilateral Pacific Salmon Treaty standards for statistically reliable data. The required sample rate in recreational fisheries is 15-20% of the estimated hatchery marked catch to recover a minimum quantity of CWTs from Pacific Salmon Treaty Chinook or Coho CWT Indicator Stocks.

While, recreational harvesters are required as a condition of their licence to provide biological samples to Department representatives when requested, it is not cost effective or possible to meet the sample rate target through direct sampling of recreational harvesters due to the wide distribution of fishing effort throughout the province and through the year. CWT sampling relies on direct sampling by Department representatives and head submissions by harvesters to a network of more than 250 Salmon Head Depots that are situated at marinas, tackle stores, fishing lodges, and hatcheries. Sample rates are commonly called submission rates in recreational fisheries because of the reliance on fisher-provided samples.

Salmon Head Depot operators provide head labels and store the heads in freezers or buckets containing a brine solution. Servicing and maintenance of Salmon Head Depots is delivered by a federal government contractor or by Department employees. Information about the origin of fish from CWT analysis will be provided to anglers, guides and depots, when CWT dissection results are available.

For additional information or locations of Salmon Head Depots:

Salmon Head Recovery Program

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Phone: 1-866-483-9994 (toll-free)

Search: DFO Salmon Head Recovery

5.9.3 COMMERCIAL FISHERIES CATCH MONITORING

Beginning in 2025, a three-year phased implementation approach is proposed to achieve the objective that all commercial salmon fisheries will be subject to comprehensive, independent catch monitoring. A more comprehensive and phased implementation approach is proposed to address concerns about the data quality from partial catch monitoring coverage, and the capacity of service providers to fulfil the previous catch monitoring standards.

Catch monitoring programs will record the time, area, location, total landed catch, catch utilization (retained and released), salmon species composition, bycatch, and, where necessary, condition of at-sea releases of all fishing activity. Independent catch monitoring will be achieved through the use of electronic monitoring equipment (EM) installed on commercial salmon fishing vessels, and dockside monitoring programs (DMP). In some instances, at-sea observers (ASOs) may be used in place of EM.

The enhanced fishery monitoring and catch reporting standards and appropriate levels of independent catch verification coverage will assist with increasing the accuracy, timeliness, and public confidence in the Pacific Region commercial salmon fishery monitoring and catch reporting programs, as well as provide the biological data required to sustainably manage fisheries and to protect stocks of concern, which is consistent with the *Fishery Monitoring Policy* objectives.

The Department will continue to seek feedback from commercial harvesters, fishery monitoring and catch reporting service providers, and other stakeholders to develop methodologies and plans for a phased implementation approach for meeting the commercial salmon fishery monitoring and catch reporting objective.

5.9.3.1 ENHANCED MONITORING, REPORTING AND SAMPLING REQUIREMENTS FOR SALMON BYCATCH IN THE OPTION A TRAWL FISHERY

An enhanced monitoring and sampling program for salmon bycatch commenced September 26, 2022 to improve the accuracy of estimates of salmon catch by species and assess potential impacts on Chinook salmon stocks of concern. Commencing the 2024/25 season, a Groundfish Trawl Fishery salmon bycatch management plan was introduced that included enhanced sampling of Chinook bycatch, and a Chinook Salmon bycatch cap for the trawl fleet, managed

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and deducted through individual vessel bycatch caps (IVBSs). A summary of salmon bycatch information including catches from 2022-2024 is available online

- [Review of Salmon Bycatch in the Pacific Region 2022-2023 Groundfish Trawl Fishery and Preliminary Results of an Enhanced Monitoring Program.](#)
- [Salmon Bycatch Monitoring and Sampling Results for the Pacific Region 2023/24 Groundfish Trawl Fishery](#)
- [Salmon Bycatch Monitoring and Sampling Results for the Pacific Region 2024/25 Groundfish Trawl Fishery](#)

Monitoring requirements and management measures for Pacific salmon bycatch in the groundfish trawl fishery are subject to change over time in response to available information and consistent with a precautionary approach to fisheries management and protection of salmon stocks of concern. For more information please refer to [Appendix 8 of the Groundfish IFMP](#) and fishery notices for in-season updates.

5.9.3.2 TRANSPORTING

Please see Part III of the commercial salmon conditions of licence for transporting of salmon for additional details and information.

Transporting conditions for the salmon fisheries include a requirement to submit fish slips for all fish transferred to any commercial vessel transporting salmon; the requirement to maintain a salmon transfer log on board the vessel receiving fish; and a phone-in hail requirement to the DFO Fishery Manager.

The requirement to submit fish slips is currently in place for commercial salmon vessel owners/licence eligibility holders and has previously been a provincial requirement for transporting vessels. It is a federal requirement for transporting vessels to submit fish slips as a condition of licence.

The phone-in hail will alert DFO fishery managers prior to an opening that the vessel is active for transporting salmon in a fishery and will provide managers a better understanding of the fishing effort during an opening. After each opening, there is a requirement to phone the DFO Fishery Manager with information on where the transporting vessel received fish, approximate amount of fish, total number of landings, and the time and location of the final offload. No service provider is needed to deliver on this requirement currently.

The salmon transfer log will identify when, where, and from whom fish were received. This Transfer log will be required to be on board the vessel and produced for examination when requested by a representative of DFO. The completed transfer log must also be submitted to the Regional Data Unit at the end of the calendar year. No service provider is needed to deliver on

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this requirement currently. This condition will complement the existing fish slip program and support improved enforcement of unreported harvests and unauthorized sales in the commercial salmon fishery.

A copy of the salmon transfer log template is available on DFO website at: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/licence-permis/commercial/forms-formulaires/smon-trans-log-journal-eng.html>.

5.9.3.3 RETENTION OF LINGCOD BY SALMON TROLL

To help meet the conservation and sustainability objectives under groundfish integration, an individual transferable quota (ITQ) management system has been established for the lingcod fishery.

Implementation of an integrated commercial groundfish fishery has monitoring and reporting requirements for those wishing to retain lingcod while salmon trolling. As in previous years, all vessels wishing to retain any amount of lingcod must have their fish validated through the established Dockside Monitoring Program. In addition to this, any vessel wishing to land lingcod must hold or acquire sufficient quota to cover catch.

Requirements include the following (less than 500 lbs. of lingcod per trip):

- Vessel must have or acquire sufficient lingcod quota to cover catch.
- Transportation requirement — All lingcod must be transported by the licenced vessel either directly to land or to a fish pen.
- In addition to submitting Start Fishing and End Fishing Reports to the designated salmon service provider, the vessel master must report to the designated groundfish hail service provider to create Hail-in and Hail-out Reports.
- The vessel master must adhere to specific dates, times and port locations when landing groundfish catch.
- Landing requirements — The landing of any fish of any species is not permitted unless a designated observer is present to authorize the commencement of weight verification.

Vessels wishing to retain and land **more than 500 lbs.** per trip of lingcod must, in addition to all of the above, meet the electronic monitoring requirements described in Appendix 2 of the [Groundfish Integrated Fisheries Management Plan](#).

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5.9.3.4 CHINOOK AND COHO CODED WIRE TAG (CWT) SAMPLING

Sampling for CWTs is a mandatory catch monitoring requirement for commercial salmon fisheries that intercept CWT indicator stocks. Fisheries and Oceans Canada uses independent designated dockside observers (CWT samplers) who are federally-contracted to the DFO Mark Recovery Program to sample the entire catch from randomly selected vessels at fish landing stations or processors. CWT target sample rates are established by the Department to meet bilateral Pacific Salmon Treaty standards for statistically reliable data. The required sample rate in commercial fisheries is 15-20% of the catch to recover a minimum quantity of CWTs from Pacific Salmon Treaty Chinook or Coho CWT Indicators stocks. Dockside observers are required to:

- Count the landed Chinook and Coho catch by adipose fin-clip status of approximately 20% randomly selected landings or at fish processing plants; and
- Examine the entire landed catch of each selected vessel and collect snouts from fish landed fresh that are determined to contain CWTs.
- Collect bags of heads or snouts from vessels that removed heads at sea and collect snouts from specimens that are determined to contain CWTs.

Conforming to the *Fishery (General) Regulations*, when requested, the master or owner of fishing vessels and the owner or any person who has the care, charge or control of a fish landing station must permit access to the catch and provide CWT samplers with assistance that is reasonably necessary to enable them to perform their duties according to DFO-approved sampling protocols including:

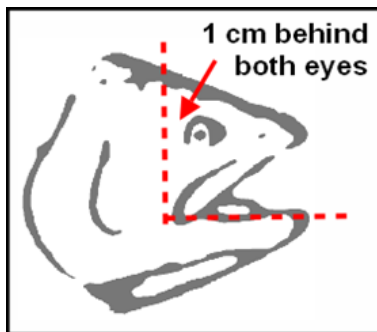
- Making the fish readily accessible to the CWT samplers;
- Providing samplers with a suitable work area; and
- Permitting CWT samplers to remove the head from the fish free of charge

In the past, Chinook and Coho were checked for a missing adipose fin to indicate that it had a CWT. Due to mass marking, it is necessary to use electronic equipment such as handheld wands or tube detectors to recover CWTs in most fisheries. Because detection rates may be affected by sampling technique, it is important to ensure CWT samplers are given adequate time and opportunity to sample the entire catch of each vessel selected. Incomplete or unrepresentative sampling of CWTs in fisheries is a serious concern because it generates unknown bias in stock identification for fisheries management, stock assessment, hatchery assessment, and implementation of Pacific Salmon Treaty management regimes.

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5.9.3.5 RETENTION OF CHINOOK AND COHO HEADS BY VESSELS THAT REMOVE HEADS AT SEA

These requirements apply to all Area F and G troll licences, unless the licence is listed in a Fisheries Notice that identifies the troll licences that are exempted from retaining salmon heads during the fishing season. Notices that list the licences that are exempted from retaining salmon heads during the fishing season are released prior to the opening of the Area F and Area G fishery. Vessels that hold licences in both Area F and G who are exempt from retaining heads in one Fishery Area are required to retain heads in the other Fishery Area unless their licence is listed as exempt in both an Area F Fishery Notice and an Area G Fishery Notice.



For Area F and G, the exemption rate this season will be approximately 75%. As in past seasons, licenses that were insufficiently diligent in carrying out their conditions of license to bring in all Chinook and Coho heads will not be exempted this season. **Head Retention:** Troll vessel masters must retain all heads from caught and kept Chinook and Coho. Recognizing that vessels may have space limitations for retaining heads, the Department allows the alternative of retaining only the portion

of the head likely to contain the CWT, referred to as the 'snout'. The portion of each head must include the upper portion of the head extending from the tip of the snout to a straight cut travelling from the top of the head, passing a minimum of one centimetre behind both eyes, and ending at the back corner of the mouth. The top jaw and gums must remain intact. There is no need to retain the lower jaw, or gill plates.

Head Storage: Heads must be stored in Salmon Head Recovery Program bags with labels. Bags and labels are available free of charge from the Department. Heads must be kept frozen until delivery and each bag must contain only the heads from a single week of fishing (where weeks run from Sunday to Saturday). All bags must be labelled completely and securely closed. Bags and labels can be obtained in three ways:

- Pick them up at DFO offices announced via fishery notice,
- Contact DFO toll-free at 1-866-483-9994 to make arrangements for shipping, or
- Obtain them from CWT samplers at fish landing stations.

Head Delivery: The vessel master shall ensure that all bags containing heads are offloaded at the first designated fish landing station at which Chinook or Coho catch is offloaded.

For complete head retention requirements, vessel masters freezing their catch at sea should refer to their conditions of license.

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5.9.3.6 COMMERCIAL HARVEST LOGS AND IN-SEASON REPORTING

A mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information is required in all Pacific region commercial salmon fisheries. Harvest logs are a record of fishing activities and are required to be kept under the conditions of licence and can be administered through either a hard copy (paper) logbook version or an electronic (E-Log) version, unless otherwise specified. Commercial salmon harvesters are required to maintain a harvest log of all harvest operations and are responsible for any associated financial costs.

To facilitate reporting of catch information and meet licence conditions harvesters should make arrangements for their 2026 harvest log requirement and enlist the services of one of these identified service providers. Sample paper logbook pages are provided in [Appendix 1](#).

The following service providers have been identified for Paper logbook or E-log programs for 2026:

Archipelago (AMR)

525 Head Street

Victoria, BC

V9A 5S1

Telephone: (250) 383-4535

Fax: (250) 383-0103

Toll Free: 1-877-280-3474

Website: <http://www.archipelago.ca>

Email: SalmonRegistration@archipelago.ca

M.C. Wright and Associates Ltd.

Telephone: (250) 753-1055 Ext: 3

Website: <https://mcwrightonline.com>

Email: support@mcwrightonline.com

Harvesters can re-subscribe on an annual basis with the service provider and continue to use their existing regional E-logs as long as software changes are not required to meet licence conditions. If software changes are required to meet licence conditions, harvesters can elect to use a paper logbook or arrange to pay for any associated costs for software updates with a service provider.

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6 FISHERY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR STOCKS OF CONCERN

Section 6 outlines fishery management objectives for those salmon stocks of concern in Southern BC whose status affects management of fisheries throughout the region. This section is not intended to provide a complete listing of all Southern BC salmon stocks of concern. Stock status and management measures implemented to protect stocks of concern not covered in Section 6 will be outlined in the species specific portions of Section 13.

6.1 LOWER STRAIT OF GEORGIA CHINOOK

In 2021, the objective for Lower Strait of Georgia (LGS) Chinook was to continue rebuilding through a comprehensive set of fishery, hatchery, and habitat related actions. In 2022, the focus shifted from the Cowichan fall run population, which has shown significant signs of recovery, to summer run populations in the Nanaimo and Puntledge watersheds.

In 2025, returns to the Puntledge River were near the 4 and 12-year averages at 8,354. Little Qualicum was slightly higher than the 12-year average at 7,755 while Nanaimo River (fall run) returns were between the 4-year and 12-year averages at 8,438 although these estimates are still preliminary and need further review at this time. Returns to the Englishman River were well below average at fewer than 200 fish. Escapement to Big Qualicum was above average with 12,953 adults returning in Fall 2025. Cowichan fall Chinook returns were the highest on record, with a total of 32,311 adults exceeding the escapement target of 6,500 naturally spawners for the tenth year in a row. Jack returns were also at the high end of the time series with an estimate of more than 18,000. Fall returns to southern systems in LGS were generally higher than the 12-year averages, suggesting marine survival may be improving for both hatchery and wild fish. However, summer Chinook returns were varied, with well below average returns for Puntledge at 93 and near average for Nanaimo River at a preliminary estimate of 591 (12-year averages 640 and 700, respectively). The summer run Chinook in these systems (Designatable Unit 20) were assessed as Endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) in 2020. A Recovery Potential Assessment (RPA) was completed to inform the listing decision and recovery planning for East Vancouver Island Summer Chinook under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA).

LGS Chinook are harvested by First Nations in terminal areas, in commercial mixed stock troll fisheries (West Coast of Vancouver Island) and in recreational fisheries (West Coast of Vancouver Island, Strait of Juan de Fuca, Strait of Georgia and Johnstone Strait). Fishery restrictions introduced in recent years include PST reductions to the WCVI troll total allowable catch, restrictions in Victoria recreational fisheries, spot closures in the Strait of Georgia, and

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terminal area recreational closures from Nanaimo to Saanich. In light of proposed management actions to protect SRKW and Fraser Chinook, reductions to recreational catches are expected to occur throughout the Strait of Georgia in the April – July period. These reductions, in combination with average to above average escapements, provided an opportunity to review both spot and terminal area closures; spot closures in the Northern Strait of Georgia were not in effect in 2021 due to the significant overlap with management measures directed at Fraser bound Chinook. A management framework that considers abundance levels, triggers, and associated fishery management measures (including potential changes to terminal area closures) is being developed consistent with the Southern BC Chinook strategic planning and the Wild Salmon Policy. Other measures underway are alternative hatchery-release strategies, based on recent work that showed large in-river, post-release mortalities, and a comprehensive watershed-based recovery initiative involving partners such as First Nations, NGOs and local governments.

6.2 WEST COAST OF VANCOUVER ISLAND (WCVI) CHINOOK

The objective for West Coast of Vancouver Island (WCVI) Chinook is to manage Canadian ocean fisheries (specified below) to an exploitation rate of 10%. Within the 10% exploitation rate objective, the northern troll fishery will be managed to a WCVI Chinook exploitation rate of 3.2%.

For the past two decades, WCVI wild Chinook have experienced poor marine survival rates and low spawner levels. In 2020, COSEWIC assessed the status of the South WCVI and Nootka and Kyuquot WCVI designatable units as Threatened, while the Northwest Vancouver Island (WVI + WQCI) WCVI designatable unit was assessed as data deficient. WCVI wild Chinook continue to be stocks of concern. In 2024, DFO Science completed a Fisheries Science Response Report (FSRR) to assess the WCVI Chinook SMU stock status, and determined that the SMU is below its limit reference point (LRP). The FSRR can be found here: [West Coast of Vancouver Island Natural-Origin Chinook Salmon \(*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*\) Stock Assessment in 2024](#).

Management actions will continue to be required consistent with the exploitation rate objective. Fisheries that this limit applies to are the northern troll, Haida Gwaii recreational, WCVI troll and WCVI recreational. The exploitation rate is estimated by Coded Wire Tag (CWT) data gathered from these fisheries. The exploitation rate limit includes Chinook caught and kept, as well as an estimate of fishing related mortalities.

In order to meet this objective for WCVI Chinook, the key management measure for the Area G WCVI troll fishery is restricting the open areas to offshore portions during the summer period. Specifically, there will be a 5-nautical-mile inside boundary in Southwest Vancouver Island

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(Areas 123 to 126) and a 2-nautical-mile boundary in Northwest Vancouver Island (Areas 126-4 and 127) during the period when WCVI Chinook return to the West Coast of the island.

As a result of concerns for WCVI Chinook that emerged in the mid-late 1990s, a suite of management measures were implemented on the WCVI intended to protect wild WCVI Chinook from recreational fishing pressure. These management measures fluctuated yearly with levels and areas of restriction. In 2000, a recreational fishery “Chinook management corridor” extending one nautical mile offshore from the surfline was put in place along the West Coast of Vancouver Island in order to reduce the exploitation rate on adult female Chinook that migrate along the coastline back to their natal WCVI streams. The surfline is defined in Schedule 1 of the *Pacific Fishery Management Area Regulations*, 2007. From 2006 to 2015 the suite of management measures remained relatively stable with very few local changes.

Chinook corridor management measures were revised in 2016 and adjusted from size limit management within the corridor to a network of open areas and finfish closures. Additional terminal Chinook non-retention areas were included to protect local stocks, and areas of increased recreational access were provided where hatchery stock composition was considered highest.

A Rebuilding Plan for WCVI Chinook has been developed in collaboration with WCVI First Nations. The plan identifies stock rebuilding targets which will be achieved through a suite of integrated management measures developed on the basis of the highest risk factors identified in the marine and freshwater risk assessments. The targets and management measures will be implemented through collaborative efforts undertaken by the Department, First Nations and British Columbia.

6.3 FRASER SPRING 4₂ CHINOOK

For 2026, the objective for Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook is to manage Canadian fisheries in a highly precautionary manner to allow as many fish to pass through to the spawning grounds as possible.

Minimal levels of fishery mortalities are required for Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂ Chinook given their poor stock status, extremely poor productivity and expectations for continued declines in spawner abundance. Any fishery mortalities will jeopardize survival and recovery unless productivity improves.

Actual fishery impacts may vary due to a range of factors, including: annual variability in Chinook distribution and run timing; distribution of fishing effort; and, uncertainties in the assessment data. Fishery impacts are not intended to be a management target, but may include incidental Chinook mortalities in Fraser River Chinook and Sockeye test fisheries, Chinook

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retention or bycatch retention in First Nation FSC fisheries, release mortalities, and incidental mortalities during Chinook-directed fisheries in mixed stock fisheries.

Post-season preliminary fishery mortalities based on the Nicola coded-wire tag (CWT) indicator are provided in Section 9.1.3 Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook, along with the post-season catch and escapement information for 2025.

In the 2026 preliminary Salmon Outlook, the Spring 4₂ Chinook MU has been classified as a stock of concern and anticipated to return well below average. In assessments from 2018 and 2020, COSEWIC assessed the status of both DUs within this MU as endangered. Expectations are for continued depressed abundance due to low parental escapements in 2022 combined with no hatchery production for the returning 4 year-old cohort, 2021 flood impacts on the 5 year-old cohort, ongoing unfavorable marine and freshwater survival conditions, and low productivity. The reconstructed parental brood year (2022) escapement for the 2026 return was approximately 10,000 spawners.

Science advice to inform the SARA listing decision and recovery planning for DUs of Fraser Spring 4₂ Chinook has been published in Recovery Potential Assessments (RPAs) that are publicly available through the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat website. Part 1 of the RPA evaluates threats to recovery and survival of populations of Fraser Chinook (https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2020/2020_023-eng.html). Part 2 evaluates population trajectories, recovery targets and mitigation options (https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2021/2021_030-eng.html).

Fraser Spring 4₂ Chinook have historically been encountered in Fraser River First Nations gill net fisheries, Fraser River and tributary recreational fisheries, marine troll fisheries (e.g., WCVI and North Coast), and recreational fisheries in Southern BC.

For further information on the management of Fraser Spring 4₂ Chinook refer to the Southern Chinook ISBM fishery Section 13.1.5.

6.4 FRASER SPRING 5₂ AND SUMMER 5₂ CHINOOK

For 2026, the objective for Fraser River Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook is to manage Canadian fisheries in a highly precautionary manner to allow as many fish to pass through to the spawning grounds as possible. For Summer 5₂ Chinook, management actions are planned to limit total Canadian fishery mortalities in the range of 10% to 14% based on a Fishery Mortality Index, FMI. The average FMI for Fraser River Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook is 4.4% and 12.2% respectively based on the 2019-2024 timeframe.

In response to low abundance, directed commercial and recreational fisheries for Fraser stream-type Chinook salmon (Summer 5₂, Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂) have not been permitted for many years.

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Concurrently, First Nations fisheries have been significantly restricted. In 2019, fishery measures were implemented to reduce fishery-related mortality of Fraser stream-type Chinook salmon. Additional management measures were implemented in 2020-2024 which resulted in the reduction of Canadian fishery mortalities for Spring 4₂ and Spring 5₂. The Spring 4₂ fishery mortality reduced from 25% in the base period (2014-2018) to a recent average of 3.6% (2019-2024), while the Spring 5₂ fishery mortality reduced from 11.2% in the base period (2014-2018) to a recent average of 4.4% (2019-2024). While substantial reductions in Fraser Summer 5₂ Chinook fishery mortalities were achieved from 2019-2024, the average estimated fishery mortality rate of ~12% from 2019-2024 remains higher than for Spring 4₂ and Spring 5₂ Chinook stocks.

All six Summer 5₂ Designatable Units (DUs) have been assessed by COSEWIC as Threatened or Endangered. While overall Summer 5₂ escapement has increased since 2019, most DUs have not seen improvement and remain below current objectives. Science advice to inform the SARA listing decision and recovery planning for DUs of Fraser Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook has been published in Recovery Potential Assessments that are publicly available through the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat website. [Part 1 of the Recovery Potential Assessment](#) evaluates threats to recovery and survival of populations of Fraser Chinook. [Part 2](#) evaluates population trajectories, recovery targets and mitigation options.

Conservation concerns continue to severely restrict rights-based Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) harvests for many First Nations, particularly in Upper and Mid-Fraser. Fraser Nations have led extensive efforts with DFO and other partners to restore habitat and rebuild depressed Fraser salmon populations to facilitate sustainable fisheries for all in the future.

Minimal levels of fishery mortalities need to be maintained for Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂ Chinook given their poor stock status, low productivity and expectations for high variability in spawner abundance. Any fishery mortalities will impede long-term recovery unless productivity improves. Actual fishing impacts may vary due to a range of factors, including: annual variability in Chinook distribution and run timing; distribution of fishing effort; and, uncertainties in the assessment data. Fishery impacts include incidental Chinook mortalities in Fraser River Chinook and Sockeye test fisheries, Chinook retention or bycatch retention in First Nation FSC fisheries, release mortalities, and mortalities during Chinook-directed fisheries in mixed-stock fisheries; these impacts are not intended to be a management target.

To support the development of fishery management scenarios, the FSMB is informed by technical analyses and feedback gathered during previous years and the 2026 engagement process. These analyses incorporated a range of information, including the distribution of fishery-related mortalities by fishery type, trends from fishery and escapement monitoring

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programs, and recent scientific publications. Section 13.1.5 provides details on technical analysis and management scenarios being consulted on for 2026-27.

In developing this management advice, the FSMB will seek input on scenarios that will best address the following objectives:

- **Conservation:** Continued precautionary fishery measures to provide a high degree of protection, maintain fishery mortalities in the range of 10% to 14% (FMI).
- **Aboriginal Priority:** Priority for First Nations rights-based and treaty domestic fisheries.
- **Other Fisheries:** Manage other fisheries targeting more abundant stocks to limit mortality of Summer 5₂ Chinook salmon.

In the 2026 preliminary Salmon Outlook, Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook stocks have been classified as stocks of concern and anticipated to return below average. COSEWIC has assessed the status of seven DUs as Endangered, three DUs as Threatened, and one DU as Special Concern within the Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ MUs. None of the DUs were assessed as Not At Risk. Expectations for 2026 are for continued low abundance related to depressed parental escapements, continuing unfavorable marine and freshwater survival conditions, and low productivity. For the return in 2026, the reconstructed parental brood year (2021) escapement was approximately 31,000 spawners. This value represents the escapement from a run reconstruction analysis that is conducted annually. That analysis uses the indicator stock escapement estimates and other data to generate an estimate of the total escapement of all Fraser Chinook Salmon (including those streams that are not monitored regularly).

On July 31, 2024, a landslide occurred on the Chilcotin River and completely blocked fish passage for multiple weeks during the migration of the Lower Chilcotin and Chilko stocks, the respective developing indicator stocks for the Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ MUs. Enroute mortality caused by the initial blockage and subsequent debris load flushed downstream has not been quantified, and impacts on productivity will not be evident until the return years. In 2025, there were no migration challenges at the slide location.

For further information on the management of Fraser Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook, refer to Section 13.1.5.

6.5 INTERIOR FRASER RIVER COHO

For 2026, a suite of proposed objectives for Southern BC Coho, including Interior Fraser River Coho have been included in Section 13 for consultation.

Assessments of Interior Fraser River (IFR) Coho Salmon stocks in the mid-1990s revealed that alarming declines in spawning populations were occurring in many spawning sites. Low marine survival rates in combination with excessive fishery impacts were identified as key

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factors in this decline. Beginning in 1997, DFO implemented a number of fishery management measures to reduce the harvest impacts on these stocks, with more severe measures being implemented beginning in 1998. In most years since that time, Canadian fisheries impacting these stocks have been curtailed to limit the exploitation rate to 3% to 5% or less, with an additional 10% permitted in U.S. fisheries (as per the Pacific Salmon Treaty management regime).

Due to generally low fisheries impacts and a small increase in average survival, achievement of escapement abundance and distribution-based recovery objectives, as laid out in the Conservation Strategy for Coho Salmon, *Oncorhynchus kisutch*, Interior Fraser River Populations, October 2006 (<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/329140.pdf>), has occurred since 2018; however, due to the persistence of relatively low (<3.0%) smolt-to-adult survival, the IFR Coho are still in a 'low' productivity regime. Current productivity is still well below that of the relatively high productivity period of 1978-1993.

As outlined in Chapter 5 of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST), allowable exploitation rates (ERs) for Canada and the U.S. are identified based on the status of Coho Management Units (MUs). Canada is responsible for determining the status level for Canadian MUs and setting the corresponding ER caps for both parties. In 2018, based on the results of the science advice and recommendations from a domestic consultation process, Canada updated the PST management approach based on the status of the IFR Coho MU using an integration of smolt-to-adult survival rates (with breakpoints at 3% and 6%) and spawner abundance. Under this approach, ER caps will be set at 20%, 30% and 45% for Low, Moderate and Abundant status, respectively. Canada will be required to confirm the status of IFR Coho MU in March of each year. Additional background information as well as a summary report from domestic consultations may be found here: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/pst-coho-tsp/index-eng.html>

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Table 6–I: Pacific Salmon Treaty Low, Moderate and Abundant status determination criteria and exploitation rate caps for the Interior Fraser River Coho Management Unit.

	Low	Moderate	Abundant
Survival	$S \leq 0.03$	Three consecutive years $0.03 < S \leq 0.06$	Three consecutive years $S > 0.06$
		AND	AND
Escapement	Monitored in CUs and subpopulations but no thresholds	Three consecutive years: • Half of subpopulations in each CU > 1000; or • Aggregate MU escapement objective (e.g., 27,000)	Three consecutive years: • All IFR Coho subpopulations in each CU > 1000; or • Aggregate MU escapement objective (e.g., revised 40,000)
ER cap (US/Can)	0.20 (0.10/0.10)	0.30 (0.12/0.18)	0.45 (0.15/0.30)

Canada or the U.S. may choose to manage to a lower ER based on domestic fisheries management considerations, as has been done domestically for IFR Coho in previous years (domestically this has been an ER cap of 3% to 5%).

Details on management measure considerations can be found in Section 13.3.2.

Management measures to protect IFR Coho will be applied from May to September when these populations are expected to be encountered in Southern BC waters. These measures are also expected to limit impacts on other Coho populations in Southern BC, including Lower Fraser River Coho and Strait of Georgia Coho populations.

Management measures may be considered for fisheries in the following areas and times to limit overall impacts on Interior Fraser River Coho consistent with annual management objectives:

- West Coast Vancouver Island (WCVI) troll (commercial and First Nations) and recreational fisheries in offshore areas from late May until early September,
- Commercial net and recreational fisheries in the Juan de Fuca Strait from June until early October,
- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries in Johnstone and Queen Charlotte Straits from early June until mid-September,

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- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries in the Strait of Georgia from June until early October,
- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries both off the mouth of, and in, the Fraser River from early September until mid-October, and
- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries in the Fraser River upstream of Sawmill Creek from mid- to late September until late October.

6.6 CULTUS LAKE SOCKEYE

In recent years, Cultus Lake Sockeye has been managed in two ways. In off-cycle years (e.g., 2025), Cultus Sockeye has been managed within the constraints of the exploitation rate identified for the Late Run aggregate. In these years, the maximum allowable exploitation rate for Cultus Lake Sockeye was the greater of a) the low abundance exploitation rate (LAER) identified for Late Run Sockeye, or b) the exploitation rate that is consistent with continued rebuilding of the population based on in-season information on returns and potential numbers of effective spawners. In 2022 (dominant year) and again in 2026, the Department is consulting on a third approach.

In 2018, it was identified that Cultus Lake had experienced severe reductions in juvenile survival largely as a result of lake eutrophication resulting in conditions unsuitable for smolt production. The Department consulted on an alternative approach for the dominant cycle where attempts were to be made to increase broodstock collection targets to bolster smolt releases beginning in 2020 which would permit the Cultus ER to be managed in-line with the Late Run ER. The current situation in Cultus Lake has not changed and as such the Department will be implementing this approach for the 2026 return.

Under the Final escapement plan presented in Section 13, the Late run LAER is capped at 20%. When combined with the 2026 forecast, Late run sockeye are anticipated to be in LAER at lower returns, less than the median forecast. At higher run sizes, the maximum exploitation rate for Late Run and thus Cultus could increase to 43% depending on abundance and MAs (see Section 13). For Late Run Sockeye, management will be based on an abundance-based Total Allowable Mortality (TAM) and the low abundance exploitation rate (LAER) as outlined in the Fraser Sockeye escapement plan; see Section 13.5.6.2.1.

The recovery objectives as outlined in the National Conservation Strategy for Cultus Lake Sockeye Salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) (Cultus Lake Sockeye Recovery Team, 2009) are as follows:

Objective 1

Ensure the genetic integrity of the population by exceeding a four-year arithmetic mean of

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1,000 successful adult spawners with no fewer than 500 successful adult spawners on any one cycle.

Objective 2

Ensure growth of the successful adult spawner population for each generation (that is, across four years relative to the previous four years), and on each cycle (relative to its brood year) for not less than three out of four consecutive years.

Objective 3

Rebuild the population to the level of abundance at which it can be de-listed (i.e., designated Not at Risk) by COSEWIC.

Objective 4

Over the long term, rebuild the population to a level of abundance (beyond that of Objective 3) that will support ecosystem function and sustainable use.

Objective 1 secures genetic variability, Objective 2 ensures the population is growing, and Objective 3 achieves de-listing by COSEWIC – the change in designation from *Endangered* to *Not at Risk*. Once the population is de-listed, conservation objectives should be consistent with (i.e., not less than) those specified for other Sockeye populations. Objective 4 proposes candidate benchmarks that correspond to our current understanding of the dynamics of Cultus Sockeye.

The full conservation strategy is online at:

http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2010/mpo-dfo/Fs97-6-2846-eng.pdf.

Alternate recovery objectives were developed in the recent Cultus Lake Recovery Potential Assessment (RPA) (<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/40876147.pdf>). The RPA identified the main threats to the stock include: lake eutrophication, adult mortality associated with change in migration timing, fisheries interceptions, and climatically-mediated variability and change in freshwater habitat conditions. The Department may include evaluation of these recovery objectives in future IFMPs but have not yet been assessed. However, it is unlikely that the RPA recovery objectives are likely to be met in 2025.

Cultus Lake Sockeye is a component of the Late Run Fraser River Sockeye aggregate, which is typically harvested in southern BC waters in August and September.

The returns of Sockeye Salmon to Cultus Lake have been particularly low relative to historic averages. To work toward rebuilding this population, Late Run Sockeye fishery management actions were implemented to reduce fishery exploitation levels on this stock. Enhancement measures have included fry and smolt releases as well as a captive brood program. The captive brood program reared fish from brood years 2000 to 2009, at which time the program was phased out – the last progeny of captive brood fish were released in October 2014. A hatchery supplementation program continues. Total juvenile releases have been reduced to

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approximately 30% of levels achieved during the captive breeding program years. Additionally, the current conditions in Cultus Lake have not improved, and as such, attempts will be made to continue broodstock collection. Freshwater mitigation measures in the past have included but are not limited to: predator control (removal of adult Northern Pikeminnow from Cultus Lake), removal of Eurasian watermilfoil and various research activities that include spawning habitat quality assessments, limnology and fry surveys, and contaminant assessment. An overview on the recovery activities and the status of Cultus Lake Sockeye to 2009 can be found in the Status of Cultus Lake Sockeye Salmon (Bradford et al., 2010), available online at: [Status of Cultus Lake sockeye salmon](#).

All Canadian fisheries that could harvest Cultus Lake Sockeye will be impacted by the need to limit exploitation on this stock. This includes:

- Closures in all fisheries with the possibility of impacting Cultus or Late Run fish when harvest limits for this stock group have been reached.
- Restrictions to First Nations fisheries in southern BC marine waters and the lower Fraser River downstream of the Vedder River. However, where surpluses are identified, first priority will be accorded to First Nations for opportunities to harvest fish for FSC purposes.
- Restrictions to recreational salmon fisheries in southern BC will include Sockeye non-retention in specific locations when Cultus Lake Sockeye are present and allowable harvest limits have been reached. This may include salmon fishing closures in isolated areas to reduce interceptions during spawning migrations
- Closures to commercial salmon fisheries in Southern BC when Late Run Sockeye are present, or expected to be present, in the area as it will not likely be possible to identify the run size of Cultus Lake Sockeye in-season due to relatively low abundance of Cultus Lake Sockeye compared to other co-migrating Sockeye stocks. These closures will come into effect when allowable harvest limits for this stock group have been reached. Fisheries directed at other stocks or species of salmon will be subject to Late Run/Cultus constraints.

Recovery Potential Assessments for Fraser Sockeye, including for Cultus Lake Sockeye, are publicly available through the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat website at:

http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2020/2020_011-eng.html

Several lines of research have been undertaken to increase our understanding of the impacts of human activities on the Cultus Lake ecosystem and to monitor the status of Cultus Lake Sockeye Salmon.

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Release targets for the enhancement program are approximately 25,000 fed fry (summer) into the Lake, 150,000 fed fry (winter) into the Lake, and 50,000 smolts (spring) into Sweltzer Creek near the outlet of Cultus Lake.

Within the Fraser River upstream of the Fraser/Vedder confluence, recreational and First Nations fisheries for Fraser Sockeye during Cultus migration timing will be managed based on Late Run constraints as Cultus Lake Sockeye have exited the Fraser River.

For harvest constraints on the Late Run Sockeye stock group aggregate, refer to Fraser Sockeye section 13.5.6.

6.7 SAKINAW LAKE SOCKEYE

The objective for Sakinaw Lake Sockeye is to stop their decline and re-establish a self-sustaining, naturally-spawning population.

Sakinaw Sockeye were first assessed as Endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) in an emergency assessment in 2002. This designation has been confirmed by several subsequent assessments, the latest being in 2016 due to continued threats from overfishing, development around the lake, and low marine survival. Sakinaw Sockeye is currently under consideration for inclusion on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA).

Following the previous emergency assessments of Sakinaw Lake Sockeye Salmon, the Governor in Council decided not to add Sakinaw Lake Sockeye Salmon to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk set out in Schedule 1 of SARA. Although Sakinaw Lake Sockeye Salmon was not listed, a recovery team was engaged to establish recovery goals and actions for Sakinaw Lake Sockeye Salmon. An immediate recovery goal was to stop the decline of the Sakinaw Lake Sockeye Salmon population and re-establish a self-sustaining, naturally-spawning population. This objective will not be achieved until spawner abundance relative to previous brood years increases for at least three out of four consecutive years and there are no fewer than 500 natural spawners annually.

To maximize chances of achieving this objective, a captive brood stock program designed to maintain genetic integrity and minimize inbreeding was initiated in 2001. The captive brood program involves variable release strategies, which not only encompass varying releases by age/size, but also explores the option of different release locations. Achieving this objective also meant that mortality, including fishing mortality, needed to be minimized, as much as practicable.

Sakinaw Lake is located on the Sechelt Peninsula in the Strait of Georgia. Migration timing data on Sakinaw Lake Sockeye is limited. Current data suggests Sakinaw Lake Sockeye have a

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prolonged migration period commencing in Johnstone Strait in late May to July and arriving at the entrance of Sakinaw Lake in the northern Strait of Georgia in July and August. Given this timing pattern, Sakinaw Lake Sockeye are most vulnerable to harvest directed at Fraser River Sockeye stocks in July extending into mid-August.

Most fisheries that have the potential to intercept Sakinaw Lake Sockeye will continue to be delayed until the last week of July or mid-August to ensure a significant portion of the return has passed through major fisheries in Johnstone Strait and the northern Strait of Georgia. The current fishery management measures include:

- First Nations FSC fisheries in Johnstone Strait will be restricted to gill net and troll only until July 25 and until August 15 in the northern Strait of Georgia.
- Recreational fisheries in Queen Charlotte Strait, Johnstone Strait, and northern Strait of Georgia will be closed to Sockeye retention until July 25. In addition, there will be Sockeye non-retention restrictions in Area 16 until August 15 at which time Sockeye retention opportunities are expected to be available in Sabine Channel.
- Commercial fisheries in Queen Charlotte Strait and Johnstone Strait will be closed until July 25 and in the northern Strait of Georgia (including Sabine Channel) until August 15.
- The waters near the mouth of Sakinaw Creek in Area 16 will be closed to all fishing from June 15 to September 15.

Recovery planning efforts to rebuild this stock will continue to be supported. In addition to harvest related measures, there will be continued efforts made to study and improve habitat, investigate impacts of predation (e.g., seals, otters, and lamprey), and undertake enhancement. Eggs are incubated in nearby hatchery facilities and the resulting fry are adipose clipped and released in the lake. The captive brood program will continue as a form of insurance to reduce the possibility of extirpation.

In 2025, 308 adult Sockeye returned to Sakinaw Lake from 138,479 smolts that left in 2023. Although marine survival continues to be low, the observed marine survival in 2025 was higher (0.22%) than the 8 year average of 0.10% for both hatchery and wild fish combined. Returns from an experimental release of Sakinaw smolts at Big Qualicum were approximately 3.4 times higher at 0.93% marine survival, suggesting a localized survival bottleneck may exist.

Expectations for 2026 are for a moderate return considering smolt production in 2024 was above average at 113,503 (10-year average is 97K). If marine survival is near the previous 6-year average for the 2024 ocean entry year, 167 adults are forecast to return in 2026 (further details can be found in section 9.1.8).

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6.8 NIMPKISH SOCKEYE

The objective is to minimize the impact of Canadian fisheries during periods of low abundance.

The Nimpkish River has generally experienced low Sockeye escapements since the early 1990s similar to other Central Coast Sockeye stocks (Smith and Rivers Inlet) likely attributed to declines in marine survival. Returns from 2010-2016 showed improvement over previous years, with above average escapement each year. In 2017, the return (30,029) fell below the average, but abundances in 2018 (83,796), and 2019 (60,418) were again improved, although both years demonstrated declines relative to the parental brood years. In 2020, estimated escapement (~24,749) to the Nimpkish was well below average. In 2021 and 2022, high flows limited our ability to enumerate the full run-timing, but escapement in 2023 indicated continued below average returns (22,527). Returns improved in 2024 (78,348), and in 2025 we counted 117,108 sockeye, representing one of the strongest returns in over a decade. The escapement target for Nimpkish Sockeye is currently under review, but the optimum based on lake capacity and fertilization ranges from 260,000-290,000.

Nimpkish Sockeye are encountered in Queen Charlotte Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound typically during June and July. In order to protect this stock, time and area closures may be implemented for First Nations, commercial, and recreational fisheries in the approach waters to the Nimpkish River (including the river). Other than test fisheries, marine waters north of Lewis Point on Vancouver Island (Subareas 11-1, 11-2 and 12-5 to 12-19) are scheduled to be closed to Sockeye retention in all fisheries until late July. However, marine waters north of Lewis Point may open to Sockeye retention in marine FSC fisheries prior to late July if in-season abundance of Nimpkish Sockeye is higher than expected and no other weak stock constraints exist. If in-season abundance permits, some First Nations FSC harvest may also occur within the Nimpkish River.

The Department is continuing to work in partnership with the Namgis First Nation on an in-season assessment program in the lower river and some FSC harvest may occur in response to returning abundance.

At this time, no directed commercial or recreational fisheries are anticipated for Nimpkish Sockeye.

6.9 INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

Spawning escapement of Interior Fraser River (Thompson and Chilcotin) Steelhead has been on a downward trend for many years, with recent years' escapements reaching the lowest on record. Threats to Interior Fraser River (IFR) Steelhead include changes in the marine

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environment, fishing mortality (both targeted and incidental), degradation of freshwater and marine habitats, predation, and competition. In February 2018, COSEWIC assessed the Thompson and Chilcotin Designatable Units (DUs) as *Endangered* under an Emergency Assessment. The subsequent SARA Listing Process was concluded on July 11, 2019, when the Minister of Fisheries announced that Cabinet had decided not to list these populations under the *Species at Risk Act*, opting instead to implement measures to recover these stocks through existing regulatory mechanisms under the *Fisheries Act*. In conjunction with the Province of British Columbia, the Minister announced the development of a conservation action plan for Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead Trout to:

reduce mortality and increase survival of Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead returning to rivers to spawn;

improve freshwater conditions through habitat protection and restoration; and,

increase science and monitoring activities.

The COSEWIC recently re-assessed Steelhead Trout (Thompson and Chilcotin DUs) and confirmed the status as *Endangered* in the October 2021 annual report. This assessment has initiated a new SARA Listing Process that is being undertaken by DFO to provide advice to the Governor in Council on whether to list these populations under SARA. DFO is working with the Province of BC on how to jointly approach the new listing process.

2026 Fisheries Management Measures to Support Recovery of Steelhead

DFO will continue to protect IFR Steelhead from incidental fishing mortality occurring in salmon fisheries using the window closure approach implemented since 2019, with additional restrictions applied to set gill net fisheries in the Fraser River. Rolling window closures will apply to most salmon fisheries located along the migratory route of Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead, including Southern BC marine waters and the Fraser River mainstem downstream of Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead spawning areas.

- I. The closure window for commercial gill net and seine fisheries (including purse seine, beach seine, and shallow seine gear) is 42 days, while commercial troll fisheries will be closed for 27 days. Following the closure window, set gill net gear will be further restricted to operate during daylight hours only, while attended by a harvester at all times.
- II. Recreational salmon fisheries within the Fraser River mainstem (including areas immediately off the Fraser River mouth), are closed for a moving window period of 42 days.

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- III. First Nations' Food, Social, and Ceremonial (FSC) salmon fisheries occurring within the Fraser River mainstem downstream of Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead spawning areas are closed for a 27-day moving window. Following the closure window, set gill net gear will be further restricted to operate during daylight hours only, while attended by a harvester at all times.
- IV. Marine recreational and marine FSC salmon fisheries remain open with a requirement for Steelhead release.
- V. Any salmon fisheries occurring in terminal areas that are not considered to overlap with the migratory pathway of Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead will not be subject to these closures.

Details of closure dates and areas that will be implemented in 2026 are outlined in [Appendix 7](#), and details are provided for all affected fisheries in Section 13. [Appendix 7](#) also contains a list of terminal fishing areas that are proposed to be exempt from the moving window closures in 2026, as they are not considered to be within the probable migratory route for returning IFR River Steelhead.

The responsibility for conservation and recovery of IFR Steelhead is shared with the Province of British Columbia. The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia are committed to working collaboratively to address threats, reduce fish mortality, and promote growth for these populations. In 2026, the Province of British Columbia will continue to implement measures to limit impacts of provincially managed recreational trout fisheries on Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead.

6.10 NIMPKISH CHUM

The Nimpkish River has seen a steady decline in abundance of Chum since 1996. Initial observations indicated the decline perpetuated through that 4-year brood cycle (2000, 2004). Observations of Chum between 2018 and 2021 were limited to small numbers of fish, exclusively associated with seal predation.. Currently DFO, in collaboration with 'Namgis First Nation, are developing a recovery plan for this population. This will include an assessment of limiting factors/threats associated with this population and an evaluation of various gaps in our understanding of the productivity of this stock. Ongoing supplementation through enhancement activities is a major component of this recovery, and transplants from the Puntledge River hatchery are ongoing in an attempt to rebuild a naturally spawning population of Chum in the Nimpkish River.

Based on the late migration timing of Nimpkish Chum (peak in river by mid to late November), it is assumed that the impact from Inner South Coast Fall Chum fisheries would very low on

6 FISHERY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR STOCKS OF CONCERN

any remnant natal population. Transfers from the Puntledge River are earlier timed, but unlikely to be intercepted in mixed-stock fisheries as the terminal and approach areas for the Nimpkish River are closed.

At this time, no directed commercial or recreational fisheries are anticipated for Nimpkish Chum.

6.1.1 OKANAGAN CHINOOK

Okanagan Chinook was prescribed under the Fish Stock Provisions making it a departmental priority to support population improvements and monitoring progress. In 2024, a collaborative [Okanagan Chinook Rebuilding Plan](#) was developed by Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) and DFO which is currently being implemented to meet the objectives outlined in the plan. The initial objective for Okanagan Chinook is to rebuild the population to exceed its Limit Reference Point (LRP) with a high level of confidence (1,000 natural origin spawners and positive percent change in spawner numbers over three generations). There are no directed fisheries on Okanagan Chinook. Minimal levels of by-catch fishery mortalities are required for Okanagan Chinook given their poor stock status, extremely poor productivity and expectations for continued declines in spawner abundance. Any fishery mortalities will jeopardize survival and recovery unless productivity improves. Efforts for rebuilding are being made through restoration, hatcheries and monitoring to increase the Okanagan Chinook population.

7 GENERAL DECISION GUIDELINES, ACCESS AND ALLOCATION

The Minister can — for reasons of conservation or for any other valid reasons — modify access, allocations, and sharing arrangements as outlined in this IFMP in accordance with the powers granted pursuant to the *Fisheries Act*.

7.1 ACCESS AND ALLOCATION OBJECTIVES

7.1.1 INTERNATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The objective is to manage Canadian treaty fisheries to ensure that obligations within the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) are achieved. As of January 1, 2019, treaty fisheries were managed in accordance with new amendments under the PST, which were being provisionally applied until the treaty formally entered into force as of May 3, 2019.

Details can be found at the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) website at:

<https://www.psc.org/>.

Review of the performance of the PST provisions occurs annually at two bilateral meetings of the Southern and Fraser Panels of the PSC and those results are published post-season.

7.1.2 DOMESTIC ALLOCATION OBJECTIVES

The objective is to manage fisheries in a manner that is consistent with the constitutional protection provided to existing Aboriginal and treaty rights and An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon.

An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon can be found online at:

<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/240366.pdf>

An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon sets out principals for allocation between the recreational and commercial sectors and also identifies sharing arrangements for commercial fisheries. An explanation of some of the features of Allocation planning is set out in Section 7.1.2.

An update on the review of the Salmon Allocation Policy can be found in Section 1.6.1.

7.2 ALLOCATION GUIDELINES

Allocation decisions are made in accordance with *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon*:

<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/240366.pdf>

An update on the review of the Salmon Allocation Policy can be found in Section 1.6.1.

7 GENERAL DECISION GUIDELINES, ACCESS AND ALLOCATION

Table 7–1: Allocation guidelines

	Low Abundance		High Abundance		
First Nations FSC	Non-retention / closed	Bycatch Retention	Directed	Directed	Directed
Recreational	Non-retention / closed	Non-retention	Bycatch Retention	Directed	Directed
Commercial	Non-retention / closed	Non-retention	Bycatch Retention	Bycatch Retention	Directed

NOTE: This table describes conceptually how First Nations, recreational and commercial fisheries might be undertaken across a range of returns. It does not imply that specific management actions for all stocks exactly follow these guidelines, but rather is an attempt to depict the broad approach.

The allocation guidelines above refer to target stocks. The application of *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon* on non-target stocks is case specific. The inadvertent harvest of different species is referred to as *bycatch*. The inadvertent harvest of stocks of concern within the same species (i.e. Cultus Lake Sockeye when harvesting Summer Run Sockeye) is referred to as *incidental harvest*. Both *bycatch* and *incidental harvest* are factored into the calculation of exploitation rates on various stocks, and therefore, fishing plans are designed to be consistent with existing policies and to keep exploitation rates on stocks of concern within the limits described in the fishery management objectives.

The Department does not allocate bycatch or portions of the acceptable exploitation rate on stocks of concern. The Department considers a number of fishing plan options and attempts to address a range of objectives including minimizing bycatch and incidental catch.

7.2.1 FIRST NATIONS – FOOD, SOCIAL, AND CEREMONIAL (FSC) AND TREATY DOMESTIC HARVEST

Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO) remains committed to respecting First Nations' Aboriginal right to fish for food, social and ceremonial (FSC) purposes, or domestic purposes under Treaty which has priority – after conservation – over other uses of the resource.

Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act* recognizes and affirms the existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples in Canada. However, it does not specify the nature or content of the rights. In 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada issued a landmark ruling in the Sparrow decision, which found that the Musqueam First Nation has an Aboriginal right to fish for food,

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social and ceremonial (FSC) purposes. The Supreme Court found that where an Aboriginal group has a right to fish for FSC purposes, it takes priority after conservation over other uses of the resource. The Supreme Court has also indicated the duty to consult with Aboriginal people to support the development of relationships with First Nations, including the consultation, planning and implementation of fisheries, and the development of capacity to undertake fisheries management, stock assessment, enhancement and habitat protection programs.

In line with the *Sparrow* decision, *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon* provides that after requirements for conservation, the first priority in salmon allocation is to treaty rights for harvest opportunities for domestic purposes (consistent with Treaty Final Agreements) and for FSC for harvest opportunities (under communal FSC licences issued to First Nations). The Department has announced plans to review *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon*; further details can be found in Section 1.6.1.

While these opportunities will be provided on a priority basis, it does not necessarily mean that fishery targets for First Nations will be fully achieved before other fisheries can proceed. For example, many First Nations conduct their FSC fisheries in terminal areas while other fisheries are undertaken in marine or approach areas. The general guideline is that fishing plans must adequately provide for the First Nations' FSC and/or domestic Treaty harvests that will occur further along the migration route over a reasonable range of potential run sizes.

7.2.2 RIGHT-BASED SALE ACCESS

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island – Ahousaht, Ehatesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their fishing territories and to sell that fish. For more information, please see Section 10.3.1.

Following conservation requirements, harvestable allocations of salmon for fisheries implementing First Nation and treaty rights take priority over other uses of the resource. First Nations' FSC fisheries, including the five Nations home use fishery and treaty domestic, receive the highest priority in allocation after conservation over other uses. The five Nations' right-based commercial fisheries have priority in allocations over recreational and general commercial fisheries. DFO has initiated a comprehensive process to review and replace the 1999 Salmon Allocation Policy, which remains underway at the time of publication of this IFMP.

In-season changes or announcements of specific fishery management measures including openings, closures and other relevant information will be provided by Fishery Notice.

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7.2.3 TEST FISHERIES

DFO uses a range of methodologies to determine in-season stock abundance and composition. Test fisheries play an essential role in providing information to support in-season abundance estimation, driving determination of TACs and ensuring that conservation objectives are met in fisheries management. The National Policy for Allocating Fish for Financing Purposes, outlined in Section 10 of the *Fisheries Act*, has been implemented since 2013 and provides the Minister with the authority to allocate fish or fishing gear/equipment for the purpose of financing collaborative science or fisheries management activities that contribute to the proper management and control of the fisheries and the conservation and protection of fish.

Table 7–2 outlines the potential southern BC salmon test fisheries for 2026. These include: Fraser Panel projects for Fraser River Sockeye and Pink, Albion Chinook/Chum gill net, Johnstone Strait Chum seine, and Barkley Sound Sockeye/Chinook seine. For 2026, a final Fraser Sockeye and Pink test fishing plan will be confirmed by the Fraser River Panel prior to the start of the season.

Test fisheries and dates in this table may change pre-season. Actual test fishing dates may change in-season based on assessments of abundance and return timing.

While an objective of the use-of-fish arrangements is for fish revenues to address program costs, in a number of cases since 2013, low salmon stock abundance has curtailed test fish revenues, and alternative funding arrangements to support programs have been pursued.

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Table 7–2: Potential 2026 Test Fisheries*

Test Fisheries, Southern B.C. Salmon	Proposed Proponent	Test Fishery Purpose	Proposed dates ^a		Advisory process ^b
			Start	End	
Area 20 GN	PSC Secretariat	Fraser Sockeye	9-Jul	16-Aug	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Area 20 SN	PSC Secretariat	Fraser Sockeye and Pink	23-Jul	30-Aug	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Brownsville Bar	PSC Secretariat	Fraser Sockeye	13-Jul	26-Sep	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Whonnock GN	PSC Secretariat	Fraser Sockeye	22-Jun	9-Oct	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Area 12 SN	A-Tlegay/_Namgis	Fraser Sockeye and Pink	22-Jul	11-Sep	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Area 13 SN	A-Tlegay/_Namgis	Fraser Sockeye and Pink	24-Jul	31-Aug	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Area 12 GN (Round Island)	A-Tlegay/_Namgis	Fraser Sockeye	13-Jul	14-Aug	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Area 12 SN	A-Tlegay/_Namgis	Chum	21-Sep	26-Oct	FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Qualark	PSC and Test Fisher	Fraser Sockeye and Pink	2-Jul	4-Oct	Fraser Panel (primary) FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Albion GN	3-way transitional ^d	Fraser Chinook/Chum	1-May	13-Nov	FN Fr. Forum ^c /IHPC
Barkley Sound SN	Hupacasath	Somass Sockeye/Chinook	May	30-Sep	A23 Round Table (primary)/IHPC
Skeena GN		All Salmon	10-Jun	10-Oct	IHPC

* For 2025, a final Fraser Sockeye and Pink test fishing plan will be confirmed by the Fraser River Panel prior to the start of the season. Test fisheries and dates in this table may change.

^a All dates subject to change based on in-season factors. In-season information from initial TFs important to determining timing of subsequent TFs.

^b Advisory process(es) where detailed discussion of test fisheries occurs. This does not preclude discussion and input happening through other processes.

^c FN Fr. Forum = First Nations Forum on Conservation and Harvest Planning

^d 3-way arrangement between proponent, DFO and test fisherman

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Salmon Test Fisheries - Pacific Region Webpage: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pacific-smon-pacifique/science/research-recherche/testfishery-pechedessai-eng.html>

DFO will work in close collaboration with resource users to ensure that the fisheries data collections necessary to set TACs and ensure conservation will continue to be undertaken.

7.2.4 RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Recreational fisheries are managed to maintain opportunity wherever stock status allows and to allow fisheries to be managed in a predictable manner, where possible. Under *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon*, after FSC, Treaty domestic and five Nations sale fisheries, the recreational sector has priority to directed fisheries for Chinook and Coho salmon. For Sockeye, Pink, and Chum salmon, the policy states that recreational harvesters be provided predictable and stable fishing opportunities. Recreational harvest of Sockeye, Pink, and Chum will be limited to a maximum of 5% of the combined recreational and commercial harvest of each species on a coast-wide basis averaged over a rolling five-year period.

If stock abundance information suggests that conservation objectives cannot be attained, closures or non-retention regulations will generally be applied. In some cases, recreational fisheries with a non-retention restriction in place may remain open provided the recreational fishery is not directed on any stocks of concern, nor is the impact on any stocks of concern significant in accordance with the *Selective Fishing Policy*.

Prior to a directed commercial fishery on specific Chinook and Coho stocks, the fishing plan will provide for full daily and possession limits for the recreational sector on those stocks. Decision guidelines may also identify considerations for changing the area of the fishery, modifying dates, or changing daily limits.

7.2.5 COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Commercial fisheries are managed to optimize the economic performance of the fisheries, to provide certainty to participate where possible, and to optimize harvest opportunities. However, stocks of concern will continue to constrain opportunities in many fisheries.

An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon provides for a commercial harvest of Sockeye, Pink, and Chum of at least 95% of the combined recreational and commercial harvest of each species on a coast-wide basis over time. Commercial harvest of Chinook and Coho salmon will occur when abundance permits and First Nations and recreational priorities are considered to have been addressed.

Please see Section 13 for the commercial allocation plan with shares by species, fleet, and fishery production area. The ability to achieve allocations is often limited by conservation constraints

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and other factors. Low impact fisheries (limited number of vessels) often occur prior to those having a higher impact (full fleet), particularly at low run sizes, at the start of the run when run sizes are uncertain or when stocks of concern have peaked but continue to migrate through an area. [Appendix 4](#) provides further information on updates to commercial sharing arrangements.

When one commercial gear type is unlikely to achieve its allocation, the usual approach will be that the same gear type, but in a different area, will be provided opportunities to harvest the uncaught balance.

Allocation targets are not catch targets for each sector. While the Department will usually plan and implement fisheries to harvest fish in accordance with allocation targets, opportunities may be provided that are different from the allocation targets. For example, in the case of Late Run Fraser River Sockeye, the Department may choose to close marine fisheries (seine, gill net, and troll) and open river fisheries (gill net) to take advantage of a low abundance of Cultus or Late Run Sockeye and a significantly larger run size of Summer Run Sockeye.

7.2.6 FIRST NATIONS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND CSAF AND INLAND DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES

The Allocation Transfer Program (ATP) facilitates the voluntary retirement of commercial licences and the issuance of licences to eligible First Nation groups in a manner that does not add to the existing fishing effort on the resource, thereby providing First Nation groups with employment, income, and increasing participation in commercial fisheries as part of relationship-building with the Department. First Nations' economic opportunities are managed under the same allocation guidelines as commercial fisheries under *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon*.

Since 1994–95, when the ATP was first launched and including PICFI starting in 2007, 506 commercial licences have been relinquished for First Nation groups. For a more detailed description of First Nations' commercial fishing opportunities please refer to Section 13.

7.2.7 MAA-NULTH FIRST NATIONS INCREMENTAL COMMUNITY-BASED ECONOMIC FISHING PLAN

Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Ka:'yu:'k't'h' / Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations, tuk'waa?ath (Toquaht Nation), Yuułu?il?ath Government (Ucluelet First Nation) and Uchucklesaht Tribe are five First Nations on the West Coast of Vancouver Island who have negotiated the Maa-nulth Final Agreement with Canada, which was finalized in 2011. As part of the Treaty and a side agreement, DFO and the Maa-nulth Nations are continuing to work towards fisheries access for sale. In 2025, the Incremental Community-based Economic Fishing Plan began implementation,

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with current access to the fishery coming from existing Area G licences for Chinook salmon held in abeyance for communal use by the Nations. Further details on the existing allocations, or a copy of the Incremental Community-based Economic Fishing Plan can be obtained by emailing DFO.PacificSalmonRMT-EGRSaumondupacifique.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

7.2.8 EXCESS SALMON TO SPAWNING REQUIREMENTS FISHERIES

Salmon fisheries are managed with the objective of reaching escapement targets or harvesting a certain proportion of the run. Uncertain forecasts, unanticipated differences of in-season run size estimates, and mixed-stock concerns can result in escapement to terminal areas that are in excess of their required habitat or hatchery spawning capacity. In these cases, Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirements (ESSR) fisheries may occur.

The Department will attempt, wherever practical, to eliminate or minimize ESSRs by harvesting in the FSC and domestic use, recreational, and commercial fisheries. It is not the intention of the Department to establish new ESSR fisheries to displace existing fisheries.

First priority will be to use identified surpluses to meet outstanding FSC and domestic requirements, which cannot be met through approved FSC and domestic use fisheries. This may be done under a communal licence. As a second priority, the local band or Tribal Council may be offered the opportunity to harvest all or part of the surplus under an ESSR licence, which authorizes the sale of the surplus.

7.3 GENERAL DECISION GUIDELINES

The following comprehensive decision guidelines outline management responses that will be invoked under a range of in-season circumstances, and the general rationale to be applied in making management decisions.

Decision guidelines are meant to capture general management approaches with the intention of working towards multi-year management plans. Specific fishing plans are described in Section 13.

7.3.1 PRE-SEASON PLANNING

Development of decision guidelines is part of the pre-season planning process. Development is guided by relevant departmental policies, scientific advice, consultation with First Nations, commercial and recreational harvesters, and other interests, and the experience of fishery managers and stock assessment staff.

Pre-season decisions include the development of escapement targets, exploitation rate limits, sector allocations, and enforcement objectives.

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7.3.2 IN-SEASON DECISIONS

In-season decision points vary from fishery to fishery depending on type, availability, and quality of in-season information; and the established advisory, consultation, and decision-making processes. Decisions include opening and closing of fisheries, level of effort deemed acceptable, gear type restrictions, deployment of special projects, etc.

Where possible, in-season decisions will be consistent with guidelines established pre-season; however, the implementation and applicability of decision guidelines and pre-season plans can be influenced in-season by a number of factors. These include unanticipated differences between pre-season forecasts and in-season run size estimates, unexpected differences in the strength and timing of co-migrating stocks, unusual migratory conditions, and the availability and timeliness of in-season information.

7.3.3 SELECTIVE FISHERIES

Selective fishing is defined as the ability to avoid non-target fish, invertebrates, seabirds, and marine mammals or — if encountered — to release them alive and unharmed (see [Policy for Selective Fishing in Canada's Pacific Fisheries](#)). Selective fishing technology and practices will be adopted where appropriate in all fisheries in the Pacific Region and there will be attempts to continually improve harvesting gear and related practices.

7.3.4 RELEASE MORTALITY RATES USED TO ASSESS FISHERY RELATED INCIDENTAL MORTALITY (FRIM)

Fishery Related Incidental Mortality (FRIM) is the sum of Release Mortalities and Drop-off Mortalities. The salmon conservation and fisheries management measures in this IFMP are based on many considerations, including estimates of the mortality rates of salmon that are released from the various types of fishing gear that are used in commercial, recreational, and First Nations fisheries. Release mortality rates can vary substantially and depend on many factors, including the location of the fishery, the unique characteristics of each type of fishing gear and method, and the species of salmon that is captured and released. In April 2001 DFO announced revisions to the release mortality rates that had been used by DFO in previous years. The mortality rates applied by DFO to each gear type and fishery prior to 2001, and the revised rates announced by DFO in 2001 with some more recent revisions are summarized in Table 7–3. The revised rates reflected the results of additional research on release mortality rates that were available at that time. DFO has generally continued to use these release mortality rates each year in the development of annual fishing plans including this salmon IFMP.

DFO will review the release mortality rates currently used for salmon fisheries in Canadian waters and update Table 7–3 as new information becomes available. Since 2001 additional

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research has been conducted on release mortality rates of salmon, and additional fishing methods and gear types have been implemented (e.g. beach seining, recreational catch, and release study for Fraser Sockeye salmon) in some salmon fisheries. The pre-2001 release mortality rates are included for historical comparison indicating which fisheries rates have changed. The 2001 release mortality rates currently applied by DFO for salmon fisheries, in some cases, are not the same as the rates that are currently applied by the bi-lateral Chinook Technical Committee under the Pacific Salmon Treaty. The results from the DFO review of mortality rates will be used to inform any additional revisions to the release mortality rates that are required to address these issues in the development of salmon IFMPs in future years.

For post-season assessments of Chinook salmon, DFO uses the exploitation rates developed by the Pacific salmon Commission Chinook Technical Committee, which employs the mortality rates reported by the PSC (2007).

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Table 7–3: Release Mortality Rates

Fishery	Pre 2001 Release Mortality Rates (for historical comparison)	Post 2001-Release Mortality Rates
First Nations Fisheries	Note: When using the same gear and methods noted below the same mortality rates were applied.	Various – Depending on gear used and fishery Gill net – 60% same as commercial below Beach seine – 5% for Sockeye and Coho in-river Fraser Modified Shallow Seine - 10% for Sockeye and Coho in-river Fraser Tooth Tangle net – 3.5" mesh is 10% Sockeye and 15% Coho Fishwheel - 5% for Sockeye and Coho in-river Fraser
Recreational troll gear – Sockeye, Coho, Pink and Chum	10%	10% except 3% for Sockeye in-river Fraser
Recreational Troll gear – Chinook	15%	15%
Recreational mooching gear – Coho and Chinook	10% for Coho; 15% for Chinook	10% for Coho in South Coast areas; 15% for Chinook in all areas
Commercial gill net (South Coast)	60% to 70%	60% with provision for rates as low as 40% where selective techniques warrant
Commercial seine – South Coast (Areas 11 to 29)	15% to 25%	25% Johnstone Strait; 50%* Area 20 – Coho; 25% all areas for Sockeye
Commercial troll – All Areas	26%	10% Sockeye, 15% Coho and Chinook
Commercial tooth tangle net 3.5" mesh	n/a	10% Sockeye, 15% Coho

*Work by researchers from Carleton University, the University of British Columbia, and the Area B Harvest Committee in 2012 and 2013 to re-evaluate the release mortality rates for Coho caught using purse seine gear in Area 20. Results indicated that short-term release mortality rates were less than the current 70% estimate used by DFO. For the 2026 fishery, the Department will use a 50% release mortality rate estimate for planning purposes subject to at-sea-observer coverage to assess Coho encounter rates and fish condition during any commercial fishery opening

8 COMPLIANCE PLAN

8.1 COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT OBJECTIVES

8.1.1 CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Conservation and Protection (C&P) is mandated to protect fisheries, waterways, aquatic ecosystems and resources from unlawful exploitation and interference. Fishery officers provide compliance promotion and enforcement services in support of legislation, regulations and management measures implemented to achieve the conservation and sustainable use of Canada's aquatic resources, the protection of species at risk, fish habitat and oceans.

In carrying out activities associated with the compliance and enforcement of Pacific salmon fisheries, outlined in this management plan, C&P will utilize intelligence-led and principle-based approaches and practices consistent with the *Three Pillars of the C&P National Compliance Framework* and the *DFO Compliance Model*:

- I. Voluntary **compliance promotion** through education, stewardship and stakeholder engagement;
- II. Intelligence-led monitoring, control and surveillance activities;
- III. Management of **major cases /special investigations** in relation to complex compliance issues.

For more information: [Compliance and enforcement policy for habitat and pollution provisions of Fisheries Act](#) - Canada.ca

8.2 REGIONAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAM DELIVERY

C&P utilizes a broad scope of activities to deliver compliance and enforcement services within Pacific Region salmon fisheries. The main activities of C&P include:

- Prioritizing compliance and enforcement measures that support DFO management objectives which aim to sustain the salmon stocks and fisheries;
- Prioritizing achieving growth indicators for enforcement and compliance activities set out by PSSI;
- Developing and maintaining positive relationships with First Nations communities, recreational groups and commercial interests through dialogue, education and shared stewardship;
- Ensuring the development and supporting of a professional fishery officer complement that is skilled, well-equipped, well-informed, safe and effective;

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- Ensuring that salmon fisheries participants are aware of their obligations to comply with the various Acts, Regulations and licence conditions.
- Inspecting fishers, vessels, vehicles, totes and containers, fish processors, cold storage facilities, restaurants and retail outlets to verify compliant product and compliance with Federal and Provincial Acts and Regulations.
- Collecting and analyzing required samples for inspection or investigative purposes
- Conducting high-profile fishery officer presence during patrols by vehicle, vessel and aircraft to detect and deter violations;
- Maintaining a violation reporting 24-hour hotline to facilitate the reporting of violations;
- Supporting traceability initiatives within the salmon fishery for enhanced accountability, e.g., monitoring and verifying salmon catches and offloads to ensure accurate and timely catch reporting and accounting, including coverage of dual-fishing opportunities;
- Collecting and utilizing intelligence to identify and target repeat and more serious offenders for enforcement effort, including laundering and illegal sales of salmon;
- Use of enhanced surveillance techniques, technology and covert surveillance techniques as a means to detect violations and gather evidence in salmon fisheries-of-concern;
- Responding to the most serious habitat violations identified by the DFO Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program;
- Continue to utilize restorative justice forums to reduce harm to fisheries, species-at-risk, and fisheries habitat.

8.3 CONSULTATION

Education, information and shared stewardship activities are the foundation for achieving voluntary compliance. C&P fishery officers regularly participate in consultations with resource users and the general public. C&P participates in all levels of the advisory process and is committed to including local fishery officers to provide users and the community-at-large with specific information related to compliance and enforcement perspectives. C&P will continue to meet with individual First Nations at the local level through the First Nations Liaison Program and with First Nations planning committee meetings where many First Nations gather.

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8.4 COMPLIANCE STRATEGY

Salmon fishery compliance and enforcement continues to be a significant priority for C&P. Concurrent to the salmon season, compliance and enforcement attention may be required to address violations related to fisheries habitat, shellfish harvest in contaminated areas, Whale initiative/response and the protection of species at risk. In order to balance multiple program demands, C&P applies a risk-based integrated work planning process at the Regional and Area levels. This process identifies priorities so that resources are allocated to the areas of greatest need.

9 PERFORMANCE/EVALUATION CRITERIA

This section is intended to outline measurable indicators to determine whether or not those management issues outlined in the IFMP are being addressed. These indicators may include those specifically developed for the IFMP, as well as from existing evaluation processes.

Potential performance indicators will be required for assessing conservation and fishery sustainability, WSP objectives, domestic and international objectives, First Nations, commercial and recreational objectives, allocation objectives, enhancement objectives, and other indicators of interest.

The Department intends to work collaboratively with First Nations and stakeholders to review existing and/or develop new performance indicators that should be included as part of the performance/evaluation criteria.

The results of the previous year's annual review follow:

9.1 2025/2026 POST-SEASON REVIEW FOR STOCKS OF CONCERN

NOTE: The objectives shown in **bold** below is the wording from the previous year's Integrated Fisheries Management Plan.

9.1.1 LOWER STRAIT OF GEORGIA CHINOOK

The objective for Lower Strait of Georgia (LGS) Chinook in 2025 was to continue a shifted focus from the Cowichan fall run population, which has shown signs of recovery, to summer run populations in the Nanaimo and Puntledge watersheds. The Cowichan River remains the primary indicator of marine survival and exploitation for the LGS fall Chinook.

In 2025, Chinook returns to the Cowichan River were well above target, continuing the upward trend since the low point in 2009, see Section 6 for more information. The preliminary estimated return was 51,185 (all ages) including 437 collected for Cowichan River Hatchery brood. Approximately 38% of the natural spawners (17,928 of 46,617) were estimated to be age 2+ ('jacks') while age 3 fish represented 61% of the adult return although final aging data is still in prep. Hatchery production present in the adult return was estimated at 10.2% using adipose clip rates from video reviewed at the fence. With an estimate of 28,689 adult natural spawners, this is the tenth consecutive year since 1997 that the total adult natural spawner abundance was above the S_{MSY} . This level of return is in the WSP Green zone. The upper WSP abundance benchmark (S_{MSY} : spawners at maximum sustained yield) is 6,500 naturally spawning adults

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and the lower benchmark (S_{GEN} : spawners required to get to S_{MSY} within 1 cycle) is approximately 1,300 Chinook.

For the Cowichan indicator stock, the most recent 5 year (2019-2023) average total fishery mortality (CYER) is 31.5% (range 12.0%-52.6%) including an average of 28.5% (range 9.8%-45.5%) in Canadian ocean fisheries. Coded wire tags from Cowichan Chinook are regularly recovered from rivers other than the Cowichan.

The escapement estimate for Nanaimo River fall run Chinook return in 2025 based on snorkel observations was 5,687 adults after the AUC expansion. A high rate of pre-spawn mortality due to ich was observed in 2025 with a significant portion of the brood collection affected. This last occurred in 2016 but has not been a factor in the intervening years.

Nanaimo summer Chinook were estimated by lower river sonar counts from March to the end of July. The preliminary estimate of 591 is still under review due to data loss during peak migration in June. Brood collection was affected by a failure of the fence at the outlet of First Lake during a rain event with less than 10 fish collected. The preliminary escapement estimate is below the 12-year average of 700. The summer run return to the Puntledge River was very low at only 93 fish, including 55 adults and 38 jacks, which is well below the 4 and 12-year averages of 390 and 640.

9.1.2 WEST COAST OF VANCOUVER ISLAND (WCVI) CHINOOK

The objective for West Coast of Vancouver Island (WCVI) Chinook was to manage Canadian ocean fisheries (specified below) to an exploitation rate of 10%. The objective for North Coast Chinook was to manage in accordance with the allocation policy, and to manage the northern troll fishery to a WCVI Chinook exploitation rate of 3.2%.

Management actions continued in 2025 for WCVI Chinook. Exploitation rates are determined post-season from Coded Wire Tag (CWT) data gathered from these fisheries. The exploitation rate limit includes Chinook kept, as well as an estimate of fishing related mortalities of released fish.

The time and area management actions for the WCVI troll fishery are designed to maintain negligible impact on returning wild (or natural-origin) WCVI Chinook stocks. The WCVI troll fishery was restricted to 5 nautical miles offshore in PFMA's 123-126 and 2 nautical miles offshore in Area 127 during the time when WCVI stocks are returning to their natal streams.

Changes to the management of the recreational fishery within the 1 nautical mile management corridor were implemented in 2016 and have continued since, changing from size limit management to a network of open or closed areas. In more terminal inshore areas, conservation measures included a combination of maximum size limits, Chinook non-retention areas and

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finfish closures depending on the level of concern for local stocks. Fraser Chinook conservation measures may continue to reduce harvest pressure in non-terminal interception areas.

The preliminary 2025 WCVI Chinook exploitation rates not yet available.

9.1.3 FRASER RIVER SPRING 4₂ CHINOOK

For 2025 the objective for Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook was to manage Canadian fisheries in a highly precautionary manner to allow as many fish to pass through to the spawning grounds as possible.

Specific fishery management actions are implemented annually to protect the Spring 4₂ Chinook management unit. The evaluation of these actions is based, in part, on the exploitation rate analysis provided by fishery for CTC indicator stocks. This annual analysis uses coded-wire tag (CWT) recoveries from indicator stocks to represent the impacts on all stocks within the management unit. The CWT indicator stock for the Spring 4₂ management unit is Nicola River. The 2021 to 2023 3-year average CYER for the Nicola River indicator stock in Canadian ISBM fisheries is 3.7%, and the preliminary 2024 CYER estimate is ~8.9%.

The post-season terminal run size estimate (from the Fraser River Run Reconstruction model) for 2025 is 6,700. The 2025 CTC index of spawning escapement is 6,000; this index represents the escapement to a subset of the total number of populations that are surveyed annually to provide a reliable index of the escapement to the PSC CTC. Fish health concerns were observed on the spawning grounds with a high proportion of pre-spawn mortality in the Nicola River likely associated with high water temperatures and limited holding habitat due to drought-like water levels. The Salmonid Enhancement Program collected histopathology samples on the pre-spawn carcasses to investigate the mortalities, with results still pending.

9.1.4 FRASER SPRING 5₂ AND SUMMER 5₂ CHINOOK

For 2025, the objective for Fraser River Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook was to manage Canadian fisheries in a highly precautionary manner to allow as many fish to pass through to the spawning grounds as possible.

The abundance of Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook returning to the Fraser River is estimated in-season based on Chinook catch observed in the Albion test fishery. In 2025, updates of the predicted return were released in-season for information purposes only, as management measures were not planned to be updated in-season given conservation concerns for Fraser River Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook.

The post-season terminal run size estimate (from the Fraser River Run Reconstruction model) for 2025 is 36,000 for the Spring 5₂ and 33,000 for the Summer 5₂.

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The 2025 CTC index of spawning escapement for Spring 5₂ and for Summer 5₂ management units is 29,000 and 21,000 respectively. These values represent the escapement to a subset of the total number of populations that are surveyed annually to provide a reliable index of the escapement to the PSC CTC. The 2024 Chilcotin River landslide location did not impede upstream migration in 2025 for the Lower Chilcotin and Chilko stocks, the respective developing indicator stocks for the Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ MUs. For 2019-24, fishery mortality indices (FMI) for these populations were developed based on the Fraser River Run reconstruction and application of genetic stock identification (DNA) to marine catch and release data. Results from this analysis for the 2025 season will be available in the fall of 2026. For the final IFMP, a CWT-based exploitation rate will be available for the Chilko CU.

The Department will be engaging with the Fraser Salmon Management Council in a technical process to review Chinook mortalities from the 2025 season in the fall of 2026. Outcomes from this work will be used to inform future management actions. Information on Chinook mortalities from the 2025 season will be provided at the 2026 post-season review.

9.1.5 HARRISON RIVER CHINOOK

The biologically-based escapement goal of 75,100 Chinook for Harrison River was achieved for the fourth consecutive year in 2025 with an approximate escapement estimate of 110,000.

9.1.6 INTERIOR FRASER RIVER COHO

The objective for Interior Fraser River Coho (including Thompson River Coho) has been to manage Canadian fisheries in a precautionary manner, with an objective of an overall Canadian exploitation rate within the 3% to 5% range, until 2026.

The natural origin spawning escapement estimate of Interior Fraser River Coho salmon for 2025 is 86,000. The 2025 pre-fishery abundance forecast was 107,000 Coho with an 80% forecast range of 85,500-138,000. The preliminary 3-year geometric mean spawner abundance for 2023-2025 has exceeded the long-term conservation objective of 40,000 Interior Fraser River Coho. In relation to the Pacific Salmon Treaty reference points for Interior Fraser River Coho, the escapement portion of the moderate aggregate MU goal was met each year from 2023-2025 but not the survival portion. IFR Coho smolt-to-adult survival was estimated at 4.8% in 2025, 3.1% in 2024, and 2.1% in 2023; therefore, the MU will remain in Low status for 2026-2027 as three consecutive years of >3% smolt-to-adult survival is required, in addition to continuing to meet escapement goals, for a change in status.

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9.1.7 CULTUS LAKE SOCKEYE

For 2025, early planning and development of the IFMP through the consultation process identified a high likelihood that the short-term minimum recovery objectives (1 and 2) for Cultus Lake Sockeye were unlikely to be met, due to the low pre-season forecast range and environmental factors. At run sizes for the entire range of the forecast level, the maximum allowable exploitation rate for Cultus Lake Sockeye would be limited to the low abundance exploitation rate (LAER) of 10% and/or equal to the ER for the Late Run aggregate. The exploitation rate on Cultus Lake Sockeye was intended to allow for fisheries on more abundant co-migrating stocks and species while planning fisheries to minimize impacts on Cultus Lake Sockeye.

Given the predicted low return of Late Run Sockeye, managing up to a 10% LAER was anticipated to promote conservation while still providing flexibility for fishing opportunities for First Nations, commercial and recreational fishers targeting other stocks. In addition, Science provided preliminary advice regarding the status of Cultus Lake and the lake's inability to support production of wild Sockeye. Brood targets were defined by Science in conjunction with SEP. For the migration period, SEP retained the required number of adults (200) to meet genetic integrity requirements while also allowing some Sockeye to migrate into the lake to spawn naturally.

Based on in-season returns, the Department attempted to manage to the Late run LAER, however, due to downgrades in run size and some catches exceeding estimates and allowable limits, the Late run LAER was exceeded in 2025. Despite this exceedance, Cultus returns were higher than anticipated and exceeded recent returns (including brood). The preliminary 2025 post-season exploitation rate estimate (including FIMs) for Cultus Lake Sockeye is 13.9%. This estimate may change dependent on post-season run size assessment evaluations. The preliminary escapement to the Sweltzer fence of 1,418 Cultus Lake Sockeye includes 1215 through the fence plus an additional 203 retained for enhancement. The escapement to the fence was approximately 114% of the brood year escapement of 1241 (including brood stock).

9.1.8 SAKINAW LAKE SOCKEYE

For 2025, the objective for Sakinaw Lake Sockeye was to stop their decline and re-establish a self-sustaining, naturally-spawning population.

Less than two adult Sockeye returned to Sakinaw Lake, each year, over a four-year period (2006-2009). Captive brood-based fry have been released to enhance Sakinaw Lake Sockeye since 2007. These second generation captive brood fish from Rosewall Hatchery were able to find the historical spawning beaches which had been cleaned and cleared of small debris in

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preparation for their arrival. Recent year escapements, hatchery fry releases, and the number of smolts counted out of the lake are highlighted in Table 9–1. The use of captive brood-based enhancement has prevented the extirpation of this stock in the wild; although, if current marine survival conditions continue, we will not reach the recovery objective in the near term.

In 2025, 308 adult Sockeye returned to Sakinaw Lake from 138,479 smolts that left in 2023. Although marine survival continues to be low, the observed marine survival in 2025 was higher (0.22%) than the 8 year average of 0.10% for both hatchery and wild fish combined. Returns from an experimental release of Sakinaw smolts at Big Qualicum were approximately 3.4 times higher at 0.93% marine survival, suggesting a localized survival bottleneck may exist.

Expectations for 2026 are for a moderate return considering smolt production in 2024 was above average at 113,503 (10-year average is 97K). If marine survival is near the previous 6-year average for the 2024 ocean entry year, 167 adults are forecast to return in 2026 (further details can be found in section 9.1.8).

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Table 9–1: Recent year escapements, hatchery fry and smolt releases and smolts counted leaving Sakinaw Lake, by brood year.

Brood year	Adult escapement	Hatchery releases		Smolts leaving the lake (brood year +2)		Predominant return year (brood year +4)
		Fry (brood year +1, x1000)	Smolt (brood year +2, x1000)	Hatchery origin	Natural origin	
2013	114	320	0	16,465	632	2017
2014	452	654	0	78,156	722	2018
2015	695	329	0	30,088	4,783	2019
2016	171	256	0	33,442	11,860	2020
2017	12	537	26	83,928	1,083	2021
2018	3	774	24	209,044*	UNK***	2022
2019	13	633	21	169,190**	UNK***	2023
2020	85	584	23	65,756*	2,280	2024
2021	26	778	24	138,479**	UNK***	2025
2022	213	311	24	106,187	7,316	2026
2023	121	297	29			2027
2024	183					2028
2025	308					2029

* A large proportion of fry released in 2019 (Brood Year 2018) were not clipped and only 3 adults returned to spawn naturally. Therefore, all of the smolts leaving in 2020 are considered hatchery origin.

** A small portion of the 2021 and 2023 smolts (2019 & 2021 brood year) were of natural origin (only 13 Sockeye returned to spawn in 2019; all 2019 brood year fry were not clipped).

*** Natural production unable to be estimated due to lack of fry clipping. Low adult returns in contributing brood year.

9.1.9 NIMPKISH SOCKEYE

For 2025, the objective was to minimize the impact of Canadian fisheries during periods of low abundance.

Since 2015, DFO has worked in partnership with the 'Namgis First Nation on a lower river in-season assessment program for Nimpkish Sockeye. The objective of the program is to develop high quality estimates of Sockeye abundance entering the Nimpkish River to support in-season management of this stock. In 2025, the new PSSI funded floating fence was successfully operated for the entire sockeye migration period (April-August) – the first time this has occurred since 2015. Briefly, the new fence system involves a permanent anchor rail anchored to the stream bed, with floating fence panels deployed to block a portion of the river, concentrating migrating sockeye to areas that can be monitored and using an ARIS acoustic system. This assessment program will continue in 2026.

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In 2023, there were no directed First Nation FSC, commercial and recreational Fraser River Sockeye fisheries in Johnstone Strait and Queen Charlotte Strait that could encounter Nimpkish Sockeye. A small First Nations FSC harvest occurred on Sockeye in the Nimpkish River.

Results show escapements were 117,108 Sockeye to the Nimpkish River in 2025.

9.1.10 INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

Based on their migration timing, Interior Fraser River Steelhead are assumed to be encountered primarily in fisheries targeting southern BC Chum, but also to some extent Late-run Fraser Sockeye, Fraser Pinks, and various southern BC Chinook populations that return in the fall months. The aggregate run of Thompson, Chilcotin and other Interior Fraser River summer Steelhead stocks normally peak in Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait in late September. The peak of the run in the lower Fraser River test fishing area near Fort Langley is in mid-October and the run normally extends through the month of October and into mid-November at that location.

Returns of Interior Fraser River (IFR) Steelhead continued to be poor in 2025/2026. Post-season spawning escapement estimates for the 2024/2025 return (which spawn in the spring of 2025) were estimated by the Province of BC as 384 Thompson River Steelhead and 154 Chilcotin Steelhead. These estimates suggested these populations remain in a state of extreme conservation concern. Recommended recovery targets for these populations are 938 for Thompson River population and from 562 to 744 for the Chilcotin River population. The time series of spawning escapement for Interior Fraser River Steelhead return migration years 1971 to 2024 (spring-time spawning years 1972 to 2025) is shown in Figure 9-1.

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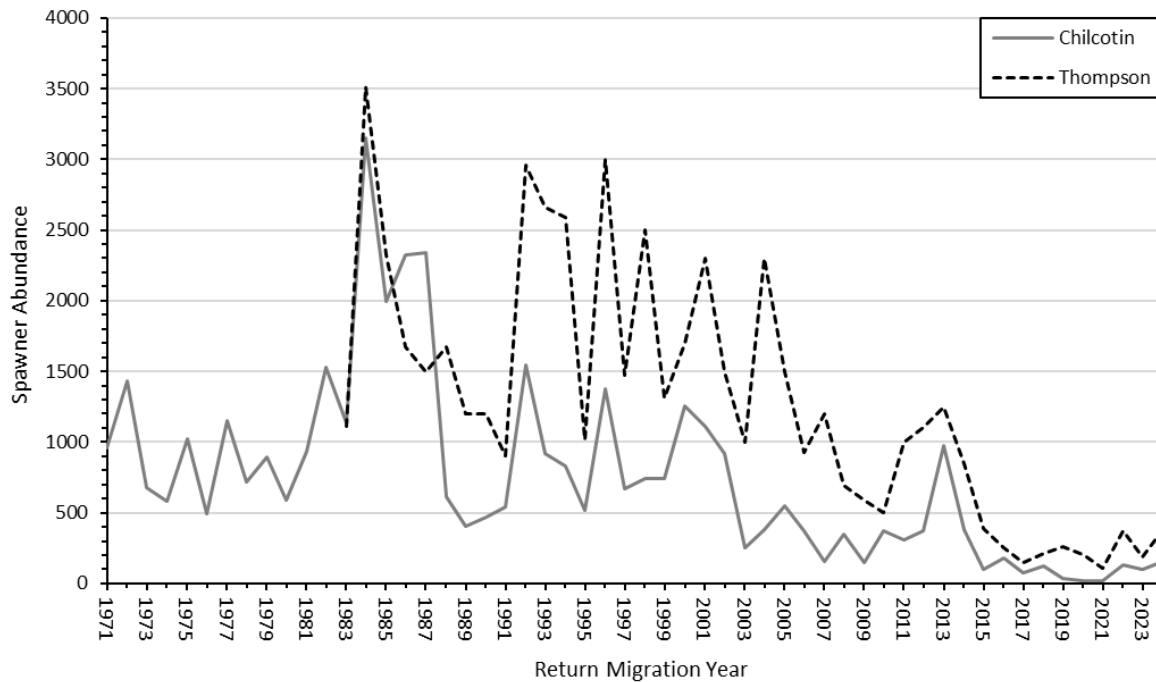


Figure 9–1: Historic trend of Interior Fraser River Steelhead spawner abundance. *Note that Steelhead spawn in the spring following the year of their return migration. For example, Steelhead that migrated in 2017 did not spawn until the spring of 2018. Field programs that estimate the number of spawners are completed summer in the year following return migration.

9.1.11 INSHORE ROCKFISH

For 2026, The management objective for inshore rockfish species (which include Yelloweye, Quillback, Copper, China, and Tiger) is to continue conservation strategies that will ensure stock rebuilding over time. These species are currently non-retention in the commercial salmon troll fisheries.

A rebuilding plan remains in effect for the Inside stock of Yelloweye Rockfish; however, rebuilding plans are no longer required for Bocaccio and the Outside stock of Yelloweye Rockfish with both stocks being managed under the Groundfish Integrated Fisheries Management Plan as of February 21, 2024. More information is available in Appendix 9 of the [Groundfish IFMP](#).

The Department is working collaboratively with all fishing interests to achieve rockfish conservation and rebuilding. For the salmon troll, recreational, and FSC fisheries, the current emphasis is on increasing awareness, given the limited data available on catch. Current work with these fisheries is focused on:

- Improving rockfish identification among fishers, technicians, guides, lodges, creel surveyors, and other catch monitors; and

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- Improving fishery monitoring and catch reporting of rockfish by species.

9.2 2025/2026 POST SEASON REVIEW FOR ACCESS AND ALLOCATION OBJECTIVES

9.2.1 INTERNATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The objective was to manage Canadian treaty fisheries to ensure that obligations within the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) are achieved.

Review and performance of the PST provisions for Sockeye, Coho, Chum and Chinook salmon occur annually at bilateral meetings. Results of the meetings are published in the annual post-season reports available from the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC). More information is available on the PSC website at: <http://www.psc.org/index.htm>

9.2.2 DOMESTIC ALLOCATION OBJECTIVES

The objective was to manage fisheries in a manner that is consistent with the Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon and the Pacific Salmon Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan.

Fisheries were generally conducted in a manner consistent with the Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon. Post-season reviews were conducted to provide information on stock status, catches and other fishery information.

9.2.3 FIRST NATIONS OBJECTIVES

The objective was to manage fisheries to ensure that, after conservation needs are met, First Nations' food, social and ceremonial requirements and treaty obligations to First Nations have first priority in salmon allocations in accordance with the Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon.

Harvest opportunities for First Nations FSC fisheries, including treaty domestic fisheries, in the South Coast and Fraser River in many cases did not meet expectations and were affected by conservation measures that restricted opportunities, particularly for Fraser Chinook and Sockeye. As in recent years, restrictions were implemented to protect at least 90% of the Early Stuart component through a rolling window closure as well as very limited opportunities targeting all other Fraser River Sockeye given low returns. Restrictions were also in place to protect Spring and Summer run Fraser Chinook, Interior Fraser River Coho, Sakinaw Lake and Nimpkish River Sockeye, Interior Fraser River Steelhead, WCVI Chinook, and Lower Strait of Georgia Chinook. Closures to protect Interior Fraser River Coho also benefited lower Fraser Coho. FSC and treaty fisheries targeting Somass Sockeye and Chinook stocks were generally successful, while success in other WCVI FSC fisheries were variable.

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9.2.4 RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES

The objective was to manage fisheries for sustainable benefits consistent with established policies.

The primary objective in the recreational fishery was to maintain the expectation and opportunity to catch fish in a stable manner. Significant Chinook non-retention measures were implemented in most South Coast Areas to address conservation concerns for wild Southern BC, including Fraser River, Chinook Salmon. Sockeye recreational fisheries were closed until open, and low in-season abundance estimates for Fraser Sockeye constrained these fisheries. All South Coast fisheries were subject to the Interior Fraser River Steelhead window closure.

In the commercial fishery, harvest opportunities were planned based on the identification of commercial surpluses and based on the commercial allocation plan. Longer-term closures or additional mitigation measures were implemented in some areas where there are significant conservation concerns for salmon stocks. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. On the WCVI there were commercial fisheries for Somass Sockeye, Somass, Conuma and AABM Chinook as well as some small limited-fleet fisheries for Tlupana and Kyuqot Chum.

**9.3 2025/2026 POST SEASON REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

Fishery officers carry out inspections on vessels, buying stations, processors, transporters, cold storage facilities, brokers, restaurants and retailers. In-season and future compliance and enforcement activities are adjusted, in consideration of the outcomes of the inspections program. The annual post-season review of the inspection program further informs C&P about the successes of the program and where to align resources to provide the greatest value to Canadians.

10 SOUTHERN BC FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES

First Nations fisheries take place using a variety of gear types and methods, depending on the location of the fishery. Marine fisheries may take place using larger communal gear types such as seine or gill nets. More terminal marine fisheries and in-river fisheries may take place using gear types ranging from seine nets and gill nets to dip nets and gaffs. The type of gear and how it is used is selected based on the location of the fishery, the target stocks, and the objectives and preference of the fisher.

First Nations fisheries are managed to provide opportunity wherever possible subject to conservation concerns and to provide priority, after conservation, over other users of the resource.

10.1 CANADA AND FIRST NATION LONG-TERM AGREEMENTS - TREATIES AND RECONCILIATION AGREEMENTS

10.1.1 TREATIES & RECONCILIATION AGREEMENTS

10.1.1.1 TREATIES & SELF-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENTS

There are currently four modern treaties with eight First Nations in British Columbia, all of which have fisheries chapters: Nisga'a Final Agreement, Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement (TFA), Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement (MNA), and the Tla'amin Treaty (?aʔjux^wegəs). Through these treaties Nations work with DFO to manage treaty fisheries on an annual basis. There are also historic treaties in British Columbia (Douglas Treaties and Treaty 8). The Douglas Treaty right to 'fish as formerly' was affirmed by Canadian courts through *Claxton v. Saanichton Bay Marina* (1989). <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100030583/1529420498350>

Eleven of the fourteen Yukon First Nations have Final and Self-Government Agreements derived from the Umbrella Final Agreement (Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun, Teslin Tlingit Council, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation, Selkirk First Nation, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kluane First Nation, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Carcross/Tagish First Nation). There are also two Transboundary treaties; the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit of the Northwest Territories have land claim agreements that identify their land and rights in Yukon. Many of these treaties have fisheries provisions. A detailed list of final agreements relating to Comprehensive Land

Claims and Self Government is provided at: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100030583/1529420498350>

Kitselas and Kitsumkalum First Nations have both ratified their Treaties in 2025, with Provincial and Federal ratification processes anticipated to follow. The Effective Date of the Treaties is currently anticipated to take place in 2028. The ratification versions of the Treaties and associated appendices can be publicly accessed via:

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/engagement/kitselas-and-kitsumkalum-treaty-negotiations/>

Fisheries chapters in modern treaties articulate a treaty fishing right for domestic purposes that is protected under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982. In addition, some modern treaties contain provisions that enable those Treaty First Nations to make laws relating to certain internal aspects of their fisheries. Some modern treaty First Nations have negotiated commercial access through a harvest agreement outside of the constitutionally protected treaty. See Section 10.3.2 for a description of these agreements.

10.1.1.2 RECONCILIATION AGREEMENTS

In addition to negotiating treaties, the Government of Canada and Indigenous peoples can also negotiate reconciliation agreements, to explore new ways of working together to advance the recognition of Indigenous rights and self-determination. These agreements are led by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). DFO can also negotiate Fisheries Resources Reconciliation Agreements directly with First Nations to enhance collaborative governance between First Nations and DFO on management of fisheries, marine and aquatic matters.

Reconciliation agreements work within the legislative framework of the *Fisheries Act*. The Act provides the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard with the legislative authority for the proper management and control of the fisheries, the conservation and protection of fish, and regulation of the fishery.

Since 2019, the Government of Canada has entered into several framework agreements with First Nations that lay the foundation for incremental development and implementation of new arrangements for collaborative governance on fisheries and marine matters. A 'framework agreement' sets out the subject matter for negotiation and describes how negotiations will proceed towards a final agreement. A final reconciliation agreement includes substantive commitments the Parties have agreed to implementing and governs the relationship between the Parties for its term of the agreement.

As DFO and First Nations develop and implement new fisheries and collaborative governance arrangements, DFO works with these Nations to engage neighbouring First Nations and stakeholders (e.g. commercial and recreational sectors).

See the BC Treaty Commission at <https://www.bctreaty.ca/> and CIRNAC for more information on current treaty tables and RIRSD tables at <https://www.cirnac-rcaanc.gc.ca/eng/1100100030285/1529354158736#chp2>

For more information on fisheries reconciliation agreements, see: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reconciliation/arrangements-ententes-eng.html>

10.1.2 COLLABORATIVE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

In July 2019, the Department signed a co-management agreement with the Fraser Salmon Management Council. Further information on the Fraser Salmon Collaborative Management Agreement can be found in Section 3.4.3.

10.1.2.1 FRASER RIVER AND APPROACH FORUM

In January 2008, Fisheries and Oceans Canada staff initiated a series of Forums with First Nations throughout the South Coast and the Fraser River watershed to discuss possible management approaches for the upcoming season in the case that there are insufficient salmon returns to meet FSC requirements. Forums have occurred annually since this time with the aim of furthering discussions on management principles and approaches for Fraser salmon, with meetings occurring between January and April of each year.

As a result of the implementation of the Fraser Salmon Collaborative Management Agreement, the joint DFO-First Nation Forum Planning Committee is working to consider how the objectives and structure of the Forum may change to better reflect the new collaborative management agreement. The Forum Planning Committee has updated their Terms of Reference and will seek to update the Forum Terms of Reference as resources become available to support the work needed to meaningfully update to reflect the FSCMA. Information will be shared at <https://frasersalmon.ca/> as it becomes available. The Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) is a Tier 2 group composed of First Nations and DFO technical staff. They meet the day before each Forum to review and discuss information and data related to managing salmon in the Fraser River. The intent of the JTWG has been to provide a venue to discuss relevant subject matter that strives to enhance a collective understanding of fisheries management and conservation and in-turn further support the participants of the JTWG, their constituents and more broadly, the Forum meetings.

10.1.3 ABORIGINAL FISHERIES STRATEGY (AFS)

The AFS was implemented in 1992 to address several objectives related to Indigenous communities and their access to food, social, and ceremonial fishing resources. These objectives included:

- Increasing involvement of Indigenous communities in the management of fisheries;
- Providing a framework for the management of Indigenous fisheries in a manner that was consistent with the Supreme Court of Canada's 1990 *Sparrow* decision;
- Enhancing scientific capacity and employment opportunities;

In addition to Treaties and Reconciliation Agreements, the AFS continues to be a primary mechanism to support the development of relationships with Indigenous communities. Work done through AFS supports the consultation, planning, and implementation of fisheries, as well as the capacity development needed to undertake fisheries management, stock assessment, enhancement, and habitat protection programs.

10.2 COMMUNAL LICENCES

First Nations opportunities to harvest salmon for food, social, and ceremonial (FSC) purposes are provided through communal licences issued by DFO. These licences support the effective management and regulation of First Nations fisheries. These licences are typically issued to individual bands or tribal groupings and describe the FSC fishery's details including the dates, times, methods, and harvest locations. Communal licences for Southern Coastal First Nations are typically multi-species and are issued on an annual basis. Shorter duration amendments to licences are also issued on occasion. For Fraser River First Nations, licences are typically of shorter duration, and are issued to provide for specific First Nations' salmon fisheries openings. Fisheries and Oceans Canada seeks to provide for the effective management and regulation of First Nations fisheries through the negotiation of mutually acceptable and time-limited Fisheries Agreements, frequently referred to as AFS agreements. Where agreement is reached, agreed-to fisheries provisions may form the basis of the communal licence issued by DFO. Where agreement cannot be reached, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will issue an Aboriginal communal fishing licence to the group based on DFO's best understanding of the group's Indigenous fishery and taking into account conservation requirements for the stocks in the area.

10.2.1 COMMUNAL LICENCE TARGET HARVEST ALLOCATION

Harvest target amounts for communal licences in the Fraser River and Southern BC are outlined in Table 10-1 below. These are initial amounts and may change through ongoing consultation

and collaboration with First Nations about their communities FSC needs and how their fishing plan supports meeting those needs. Actual opportunities and catches will be dependent on, among other factors: in-season stock strength, management measures taken to ensure conservation of individual stocks, community FSC needs of all First Nations with access to the stock, and alternative sources of salmon, if preferred species are not available locally due to low abundance. Where a proposal for a change to a First Nation's FSC access is received, the Department will evaluate the proposal against the common set of principles and considerations outlined in the Pacific Region's Framework for changes to Food Social and Ceremonial Fisheries Access. The Department will consult and work with First Nations on FSC access towards a balance between the diversity and abundance of resources that are locally available, community needs and preferences, and operational management considerations. The Department's operational approach and criteria can be found online at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/fn-pn/fnfc-2014/docs/aboriginal-fishing-peches-autochtones-eng.pdf>

Table 10-1: Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts

	South Coast First Nations *	Lower Fraser Area First Nations * #	Mid/Upper Fraser First Nations	Total
Sockeye Fraser River	257,450	434,000	350,000	1,050,850
Sockeye Non-Fraser River	15,600**	0	20,000	35,600
Coho	Directed harvest may be permitted in specific areas or terminal systems where abundance permits based on in-season assessment.			
Pink	46,350	129,800	9,500	188,150
Chum	142,460	92,800	0	231,800
Chinook	31,060	25,300	18,000	70,060
Total Salmon	492,920	681,900	389,000	1,561,460

* Note: Maa-nulth, Tsawwassen, and Tla'amin Treaty domestic fishery allocations are not included here.

Note: these harvest targets are initial amounts prior to any negotiated comprehensive fisheries agreement between some Lower Fraser First Nations and DFO for economic opportunities.

** Note: The 15,600 total non-Fraser Sockeye amount does not include Maa-nulth treaty allocation or the FSC quantum in the Tsu-ma-uss agreement.

10.3 INDIGENOUS COMMERCIAL FISHING OPPORTUNITIES

10.3.1 FIVE NATIONS' RIGHT-BASED SALE FISHERY

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island - Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have

aboriginal rights to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined Fishing Territories and to sell that fish.

The 2023/24 *Five Nations Multi-species Fishery Management Plan* (FMP) outlined the fishing opportunities for the five Nations to exercise their rights to harvest and sell salmon, groundfish, crab, prawn, gooseneck barnacles, and sea cucumber. The FMP was extended to March 31, 2025 while the Government of Canada and the five Nations completed negotiations for an *Incremental Reconciliation Agreement for Fishery Resources* (IRAFR).

The IRAFR finalized in 2024 is a two-year agreement providing the framework for an effective and collaborative approach to governance, management and planning of the five Nations' fisheries resources. The agreement recognizes that the five Nations, through their respective ha'wiih (hereditary leadership) and elected leadership, have a role in the management of fisheries in their territories. In response to the Nations' interests, DFO and the five Nations authorized an extension of the Nations' fishing area from 9 nautical miles offshore to 69 nautical miles, effective July 17, 2024.

The IRAFR also provides funding to the five Nations for implementation, capacity building, and to acquire commercial fishing access. It sets out mechanisms for a Community-Based Economic Fishery plan, including shared goals and objectives to support the development of healthy, self-reliant and sustainable fisheries for the five Nations that will contribute to the local and Canadian economy.

The extended 2023/24 FMP is available here: : <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/41253413.pdf>

10.3.2 MODERN TREATY NATIONS AGREEMENTS

Harvest Agreements

Some modern treaty First Nations have negotiated communal commercial access through a Harvest Agreement. The Maa-nulth and Tsawwassen First Nations each have commercial fisheries through their Fisheries Harvest Agreements. These Agreements lay out commercial access (licences) and corresponding allocations that have been provided to these Treaty Nations.

Tsawwassen First Nations Harvest Agreement:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/agreements/harvest_agreement.pdf

Maa-nulth First Nations Harvest Agreement:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/zzzz-to-bemoved/9efbd86da302a0712e6559bdb2c7f9dd/9efbd86da302a0712e6559bdb2c7f9dd/agreements/maa_nulth_first_nations_harvest_agreement.pdf

Communal Sale Fisheries

Under specific treaty provisions, communal sale fisheries may also be negotiated through Harvest Agreements between DFO and modern treaty First Nations. Beginning in 2024, the Maa-nulth First Nations have one such agreement in place, the Huu-ay-aht First Nations - Canada Enhanced Sarita Chinook Terminal Harvest Arrangement (see section 13.1.3.4.3), and are in the early stages of exploring the potential for a future harvest arrangement for terminal Sugsaw Chum Salmon. In 2025 the Maa-nulth First Nations Incremental Community-based Economic Fishing Plan (ICEFP) for Chinook salmon was initiated.

10.3.3 ALLOCATION TRANSFER PROGRAM (ATP)

The AFS was implemented to address several objectives related to Indigenous communities and their access to the resource. One of these objectives was to contribute to the economic self-sufficiency of Indigenous communities through increasing participation in commercial fisheries. These activities were also considered as part of relationship-building with the Department. Between ATP (launched 1994) and PICFI (launched 2007) approximately 500 commercial licences have been made available for Indigenous participation.

Federal funding for the ATP ceased on April 1, 2011. As a result, the ATP inventory of access is fully allocated to coastal Indigenous communities on an annual basis. ATP will continue to be a source of allocation for communal commercial licences; however, the Department does not plan to acquire any additional licences.

10.3.4 PACIFIC INTEGRATED COMMERCIAL FISHERIES INITIATIVE (PICFI)

The Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) was announced in 2007 and is aimed at achieving environmentally sustainable and economically viable commercial fisheries, where conservation is the first priority and Indigenous aspirations are supported. PICFI builds on fisheries reform work begun in response to the 2004 reports of the First Nations Panel on Fisheries and the Joint Task Group on Post-treaty Fisheries, as well as subsequent discussions in a wide variety of forums that have confirmed the need for PICFI. PICFI seeks to build BC and Yukon First Nations communities' capacity to fish and operate commercial fishing enterprises (CFEs) and aquaculture businesses. It also seeks to strengthen community economic self-sufficiency within the framework of an orderly, stable integrated commercial fishery. Commercial fishing enterprises participating in PICFI can apply for funding under two different

components: the first is capacity building which includes harvester's training funds to support training for harvesters and fisheries-related diversification works, and the second is business development. In addition, eligible First Nations in the Pacific Region can apply for aquaculture development funding, a third funding envelope in the program to support First Nations in developing their aquaculture operation.

In 2017, it was announced that the Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) would receive permanent, long-term funding, with a commitment to expanding the program to include more First Nations. The program provides funding and support to First Nations groups and communities in Canada's Pacific region, aiming to maximize the potential of communal fishing enterprises and strengthen community economic self-sufficiency within an organized and stable commercial fishery. PICFI receives ongoing funding annually. Commercial Fisheries Enterprises (CFE) are eligible for up to \$340,000 under the Business Development Source (BDS) funding envelope and up to \$85,000 per enterprise for activity-based projects under the Capacity Building Support (CBS) envelope. In 2025, PICFI established additional funding opportunities under the Special Measure Funding, the funding opportunities are based upon CFE needs at the time.

The Aquaculture Development Source (ADS) funding envelope, launched in 2018/19, supports aquaculture projects under PICFI with an annual budget of \$3 million. Additionally, the Indigenous Marine Servicing Initiative (IMSI) was established in 2018/19 with a \$1 million annual fund available to support First Nations communities with vessel servicing and marina services, administered nationally in collaboration with PICFI. Applicants can request additional funding for short term projects designed to improve or diversify their business model under this initiative.

PICFI works with eligible participants, Indigenous organizations, and other stakeholders to co-design, co-develop and co-deliver the program that achieve DFO's intended results of improved outcomes for Indigenous Peoples. The six key structures in place to support to the delivery of the program and the use of a collaborative approach of co-design, co-develop and co-deliver are the Business Development Management Committee (BDMC), Business Development Team (BDT), Capacity Development & Training Advisor, Independent Third Party Evaluator (ITPE), Application Review Committee (ARC), and Special Planning Sessions. The governance of PICFI delivery model contributes to effective collaboration with Indigenous communities. The BDMC is co-chaired by a DFO senior official and an executive of a First Nations organization (First Nations Fisheries Council) and includes other DFO personnel, Indigenous organizations, and program delivery partners to set direction, provide guidance to program delivery, and oversees work of program delivery partners. Further, key delivery partners, such as the BDT, the Training Advisor, the ITPE, and the ARC, operate at arm's length from DFO, limiting direct

government involvement, which adds an element of independence to provide ongoing, transparent support to CFEs and First Nations in the program.

PICFI supports 28 active Indigenous owned Commercial Fisheries Enterprises (CFEs) comprised of 117 member nations in BC on commercial fisheries, and up to 10 First Nations owned aquaculture projects annually.

More information on PICFI is available at: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/picfi-ipcip/index-eng.html>

10.3.5 FIRST NATIONS DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES

Discussions regarding demonstration fisheries that will provide commercial opportunities for First Nations and allow for experimentation and testing of inland fisheries are on-going with First Nations and stakeholders through the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework process. For 2026, as in previous years, the focus with First Nations will be on experimenting mainly in terminal areas on abundant stocks. These fisheries will be conducted separately from FSC fisheries, using the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery and fish harvested will be off set with licences voluntarily relinquished from the commercial fishery. The demonstration fisheries proposed are described in [Appendix 4](#).

As part of the reform of Pacific fisheries, DFO is looking for opportunities to increase First Nations participation in commercial fisheries through an interest-driven business planning process. New planning approaches and fishing techniques will be required to ensure an economically viable fishery. In recent years some First Nations inland demonstration fisheries have occurred in order to explore the potential for inland fisheries targeting terminal runs of salmon.

10.3.5.1 TRANSITION OF FIRST NATION INLAND DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES TO COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

In 2014, an independent review and evaluation of the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) was completed by Malatest and Associates and a number of recommendations were made.

Recommendation four was related to development of a transition strategy moving demonstration fisheries to regularized fisheries. In response to the review, the Department has developed a transition strategy for the in-river First Nation demonstration component of PICFI. The Department identified criteria to be incorporated into an evaluation framework which will enable the transition of Inland First Nations Demonstration fisheries to regular commercial fisheries in the future.

A transition strategy has been approved to proceed on a case-by-case basis of successful inland demonstration fisheries developed through the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI). The evaluation criteria in the strategy will assess their sustainability and ability to meet management objectives, including the ability to harvest fish allocations, conservation objectives and fishery management requirements. If the criteria are met, the transition to an ongoing commercial fishery would occur and may be defined in an Access Agreement. This work is intended to improve consistency and transparency in how the Department assesses, implements, and reviews demonstration fisheries while supporting integrated commercial fisheries consistent with the vision and principles of Pacific Fishery Reform.

10.3.6 DUAL FISHING

Many First Nations have expressed a strong interest in conducting dual fishing to support self-determination and cultural practices such as utilizing all fish caught. Dual fishing increases access for FSC purposes and reduces costs of conducting FSC fisheries by eliminating the need for separate sale and FSC fishing trips.

In 2026, Type B (bycatch-type) dual fishing in Lower Fraser Economic Opportunity, demonstration and Treaty harvest agreement commercial fisheries will continue. These pilots enable retention of non-target bycatch for FSC purposes that the First Nation would otherwise be licenced to harvest under their FSC licences, where there is commercial TAC identified to initiate a directed commercial fishery of a different target species. Retention of bycatch for FSC purposes would be permitted subject to available allocation, sufficient abundance, a valid FSC licence for the fishing area, compliance with communal licence areas, and mandatory landing requirements, including any additional catch monitoring and reporting requirements to separately account for FSC and sale harvests.

Dual fishing opportunities will align with four key objectives: conservation and sustainable harvest, FSC priority, orderly and manageable fisheries, and transparency and predictability. Where pilots are implemented, results will be reviewed and evaluated post-season.

II SOUTHERN BC RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Recreational fisheries are managed to maintain opportunity wherever stock status allows and to allow fisheries to be managed in a predictable manner, wherever possible.

II.1 RECREATIONAL VISION

In May 2018 the Sports Fish Advisory Board created '*Vision 2021*' – *A Strategic 10-point framework to grow Canada's recreational fishing sector on the Pacific coast*. It serves as a framework for developing initiatives and actions to support achievement of a collective vision for the recreational fishery in BC. The recreational fisheries Vision 2021 document is available from the Regional Manager Recreational Fisheries Greg Hornby at Greg.Hornby@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

II.2 LICENCING

The recreational harvest of various finfish and invertebrate species in BC is regulated via the *British Columbia Sport Fishing Regulations*, 1996 made under the *Fisheries Act*. A DFO Tidal Waters Sport Fishing licence is required for the recreational harvest of all species of fish and marine invertebrates.

Tidal Waters Sport Fishing licences may be purchased for a 1 day, 3 day, or 5 day period, or as an annual licence, covering the period April 1 (or date of purchase, whichever is later) to March 31 the following year. The annual licence fee is not pro-rated for annual licences purchased mid-season. Fees depend on licence duration, age (senior, adult, juvenile) and residency status. Licences for juveniles (under 16 years old) are free. Concessionary fees are not otherwise available. There were over 352,000 adult fishers participating in BC's tidal waters recreational fishery in 2025/26.

Licences may be purchased online via the National Recreational Licensing System:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/licence-permis/application-eng.html>.

Alternatively, licences may be purchased over the counter at Independent Access Providers (IAPs) in many areas (note that the IAP may charge an additional service fee).

A list of IAPs is available at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/licence-permis/iap-fai-eng.html>.

Pacific Region recreational fishing licence statistics are available here

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/licence-permis/stats-eng.html>

II.2.1 INFORMATION ON OPENINGS AND CLOSURES

The regulations for recreational fishing are provided online in the British Columbia Tidal Waters Sport Fishing Guide, which lists open and closed times, catch limits, admissible gear types, size limits (where applicable), and open and closed areas. In addition, please check your Conditions of Licence (printed on your fishing licence) for other regulatory requirements.

Changes to regulations are issued in Fishery Notices which are posted online and sent to subscribers by email; these changes are also updated to the Sport Fishing Guide.

The printed Sport Fishing Guide booklet is no longer being produced or distributed to reduce costs and environmental impacts. The online Sport Fishing Guide allows for in-season regulations to be accurately provided and ensures all the regulations are current. Staff at local DFO offices can also provide regulatory information.

The British Columbia Tidal Waters Sport Fishing Guide is available at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/index-eng.html>

Viewing Fishery Notices and application to receive Fishery Notices by email is available at:

<http://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>

Contact information for DFO offices is available at:

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/contact/regions/pacific-pacifique-eng.html>

For questions or comments of a general nature regarding DFO in the Pacific Region, call 604-666-0384 or email info@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

11.2.1.1 CHINOOK AND COHO HEAD-OFF LENGTH EQUIVALENTS

Recreational Chinook Salmon regulations specify a variety of minimum and maximum overall length thresholds. In 2022, the Department introduced equivalent minimum and maximum head-off length measurements for each threshold for Chinook and Coho to the conditions of license. This enables fishers to remove heads for transport and to contribute to the Salmon Head Recovery Program for coded wire tag recoveries prior to returning home, while allowing enforcement of size-specific daily and possession limits.

Head-off lengths for Chinook and Coho will be measured from the fork of the tail to the anterior (front) of the insertion of the pectoral fin; this measure is the same as that used to determine compliance with size limits in recreational halibut. A description of how this measure would be taken by enforcement officers inspecting recreational catches, as well as the specific head-off equivalent lengths corresponding to each overall (head-on) length used in

regulations, will be specified on the Tidal Water Sport Fishing licences beginning with the 2022-23 licence season and into the future.

11.2.1.2 FISHERY NOTICES

To sign up to have recreational Fishery Notices sent directly to your email, there is a link to subscribe to fishery notices on the Fishery Notice web page. Fishery Notices include important alerts to in-season changes for areas and species, fishery openings and closures, as well as timely health advisories for e.g. marine bio toxins or fuel spills.

To view or sign-up to receive Fishery Notice notifications by email is available at:

<http://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>

11.2.1.3 USING MOBILE DEVICES AND THE FISHINGBC APP

The FishingBC App, developed by the Sport Fishing Institute of BC, can be downloaded to a mobile device to assist with access to regulatory information for species, areas, fishing gear while on the water (along with other functionalities). The FishingBC App may be linked (using the internet) with your National Recreational Licensing System (NRLS) account to download a copy of your tidal water sports fishing licence to your mobile device and record catch (chinook salmon, halibut and lingcod) using the app Catch Log for real-time display to your licence on your mobile device. Note that catch records will then be automatically shared between your NRLS account and your app account. In the event of any technical issues with these new features of the app, a paper licence must be used for regulatory catch recording purposes (or NRLS).

Please note: the DFO Sport Fishing Guide website is the official site for regulatory information in the event of a discrepancy with the FishingBC App. The FishingBC App may be downloaded from the App Store (Apple devices) and from the Google Play Store (Android devices). Learn more about these app features at <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/licence-permis/fishingbc-pechebc-app-faq-eng.html> and at <http://www.fishingbcapp.ca/>

11.2.1.3.1 INTERNET RECREATIONAL EFFORT AND CATCH (iREC) REPORTING PROGRAM

The internet Recreational Effort and Catch (iREC) reporting program is an online program that has been collecting effort and catch information from Tidal Waters Sport Fishing licence holders since July 2012. All 2026-27 standard adult Tidal Water Recreational Fishing licences will be assigned to the iREC reporting program. Annual licence holders are required to report for only one month to limit their reporting burden. Information regarding the iREC reporting

requirement is printed on each licence including the reporting period, the website at which to report, a unique iREC Access ID and reporting deadline. Further, licence holders with a valid email address in the National Recreational Licencing system (NRLS) will receive emails reminding them to complete their iREC reports. Licence holders who have linked the FishingBC App with their NRLS account will also receive in-app notifications reminding them to complete their iREC reports. Providing complete and accurate information to the iREC program when assigned is a condition of licence (i.e., mandatory requirement).

The iREC reporting program is one of the sources used in developing DFO official catch and effort estimates. The iREC reporting program methodology was peer reviewed and published by the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS) in 2015. This program provides monthly estimates of effort for six fishing methods and catch for over 80 species of sport caught finfish and invertebrates in all Pacific Fishery Management Areas based on responses by Tidal Waters Sport Fishing Licence holders. The recreational fishing methods covered by the iREC reporting program include boat-based angling, angling from shore, shellfish trapping from boat and shore, beach collecting, and diving. iREC estimates are developed for methods and species not covered by the marine creel surveys, which cover only boat-based angling, and for months and areas not covered by marine creel surveys.

More information about the iREC reporting program is available at:

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/report-declarez-eng.html>

12 SOUTHERN BC COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Details regarding specific commercial fisheries are contained in Section 13.

12.1 LICENSING

Click the following link <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/licence-permis/index-eng.html> for information on:

- National Online Licensing System (NOLS) Client Support – Licensing Services
- Licence category
- Licence category background
- Licence renewal fees
- Licence renewal and issuance

12.2 OPENINGS AND CLOSURES

Due to uncertainty of both timing and size of returning salmon runs, many commercial openings are not confirmed until a few days prior to the actual opening. Also, the management plan for any area may change in-season. Fishing Areas and Subareas (or portions thereof), provisions for extensions, opening patterns, and the duration of the fishing season can all be adjusted based on factors such as weak stock concerns, target stock abundance, fishing effort, rate of gear selectivity, domestic allocations, and other factors.

This fishing plan is designed to minimize the incidental harvest and bycatch of a range of stocks of concern (see Section 6). Fisheries that occur on the South Coast may be required to release all non-target species to the water with the least harm, depending on local stock concerns.

Under circumstances where there appears to be an abundance of fish that could support a commercial fishery and that fishery is not specifically addressed in the IFMP, DFO will address requests to fish as identified below:

- Attempt to verify the abundance using available observations and information of the salmon species and to determine whether or not it could provide a fishing opportunity consistent with conservation objectives and Allocation priorities for First Nations FSC and recreational fisheries. DFO will consult with local First Nations regarding any interests or concerns they may have.

- If 1 is addressed and there appears to be adequate numbers of fish to support some level of a commercial fishery; then a precautionary approach will be taken and information requirements will be discussed and agreed upon. Initially, a limited number of vessels may be licenced, and independent catch verification will be required with timely reporting of harvest data.
- Regular dialogue between harvesters, DFO, and others — as appropriate — will take place throughout the fishery including whether the scope of the fishery could be increased and other relevant parameters.

DFO continues to encourage the development of demonstration fisheries that promote biologically sustainable and economically viable fisheries. Fishery managers are working with fleet advisors to develop demonstration fisheries that experiment with meeting a range of objectives including matching fleet size to the available harvest, pacing fisheries to maximize value of the harvest, and developing more cooperative fishing arrangements between harvesters.

In addition to existing demonstration fisheries reviewed and approved prior to 2016; the collaborative work of the Department, FNFC SCC, and CSAB through the initiative to update the CSAF has resulted in a common assessment process to review and develop flexible harvest arrangements (CSAF Demonstration fisheries). Additional detail on CSAF demonstration fisheries proposed for this season and information on other related work is outlined in [Appendix 4](#).

12.3 COMMERCIAL SALMON ALLOCATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section describes the commercial salmon allocation implementation plan, which can be found here: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/saf-crrs/docs/reccsumm-majsomm-eng.pdf> An overview of the process to update the CSAF initiated in 2013, with principles and guidelines approved in 2015 and an evaluation framework for assessing CSAF demonstration fishery proposals implemented in 2016. For background information on the CSAF initiative please see: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/saf-crrs/index-eng.html>

COMMERCIAL ALLOCATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FROM 2015 – PRESENT

Shares recommended by the Commercial Salmon Advisory Board (CSAB) were intended to apply for a 5-year period (2015 through 2019 seasons) with provision for a review after year 4

(2018 season) to determine if adjustments should be made to any sharing arrangements in subsequent years. Consideration of changes to the commercial allocation implementation plan may be considered in the future based on advice for the CSAB and any changes will be consulted on in advance of the fishing season through the IFMP process.

The sharing arrangements described in this plan are intended to guide fishing arrangements at the local level and are not fixed entitlements. Application of these sharing arrangements is subject to meeting all conservation objectives, First Nations obligations, international commitments, deliverability and manageability constraints and other management considerations.

Although best efforts will be made to achieve these allocation targets/shares, no guarantees are offered that allocations will actually be achieved in any given year. The achievement of these shares will depend upon the ability to fish selectively and the conservation needs of the resource. In the event that allocations are not achieved, no compensatory adjustments will be made to future allocations.

As in previous years, there will be no directed commercial fisheries for Fraser River Sockeye or Fraser River Pink salmon in the north (i.e., area licence categories A, C and F and First Nations economic fisheries).

The tables below provide a complete list of allocation shares by gear type, species and production area for fisheries starting in 2015. Three new productions were approved in 2015 to clarify sharing arrangements associated with the Pacific Salmon Treaty for troll harvests of AABM Chinook and AB line Pink fisheries.

SOCKEYE

Description	Areas	Seine A	Gill Net C	Troll F
Skeena/Nass	1, 3 to 5, 101 to 105	25%	75%	*
Central Coast	6 to 8	80% ^a	20% ^b	*
Rivers/Smith Inlets	9 to 10	5%	95%	^c

Notes on Sockeye allocation (north):

* bycatch provisions

^a share reflects current Sockeye bycatch during Pink directed fisheries

^b potential for re-negotiation of sharing arrangements in event of a future directed Sockeye fishery

^c potential for future re-negotiation

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Local	23	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0% ^c	0.0%
South-Fraser	11 to 20, 29, 121, 123 to 127	48.5%	21.6%	25.1%	0.0% ^d	4.8%
South-Fraser – Large return year (e.g. 2026)	11 to 20, 29, 121, 123 to 127	48.015%	21.384%	24.849%	1% ^d	4.752%

Notes on Sockeye allocation (south):

^c potential for future re-negotiation

^d a 1% share to occur in large Fraser River return years only. A 1% reduction will be proportionately applied across other fleets in those years

PINK

Description	Areas	Seine A	Gill Net C	Troll F
North	1, 2E, 2W (even), 3 to 5, 101 to 105	75.5%	22.5% ^a	2.0%
Central	6 to 10	95.0%	5.0% ^b	*

Notes on Pink allocations (north):

* bycatch provision

^a Skeena sharing 75% seine: 25% gill net

^b potential for future re-negotiation

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
Fraser	11 to 20, 29, 121, 123 to 127	82.5%	4.0%*	3.0%*	0.5% ^c	10.0%
Mainland	12 to 13 (mainland inlets only)	73.0%	9.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18.0%

Notes on Pink allocations (south):

* Pink bycatch provision required for fisheries on more abundant species

^c potential for future re-negotiation. Pink bycatch required for fisheries on more abundant species

NEW PRODUCTION AREA STARTED IN 2015

Description	Area	Troll F
A-B line Pink troll fishery	101	100%

CHUM

Description	Areas	Seine A	Gill Net C	Troll F
North	1, 2E, 2W, 101 to 111, 130, 142	54.0%	43.0%	3.0%
North	3 to 5	55.0% ^b	45.0% ^b	*
Central	6 to 10	45.0% ^c	55.0%	*

Notes on Chum allocations (north):

^b recent Chum non-retention; fishery allows bycatch of Chum only

^c currently Chum non-retention

* bycatch provision

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Inside	11 to 19, 28 to 29	63.0%	19.2%	12.0%	0.0%	5.8%
Nitinat	21 to 22	65.5%	0.0%	34.5%	*	0.0%
South Outside	23 to 27	0.0% ^d	98.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%

Notes on Chum allocations (south):

* bycatch provision

^d potential for future re-negotiation if Chum populations re-build

Commercial allocation sharing arrangements in Johnstone Strait are: seine Area B – 77%; gill net Area D – 17%; and troll Area H – 6%.

COHO

Description	Areas	Seine A	Gill Net C	Troll F
North	1 to 10, 101 to 111, 130, 142	12.5%	6.5%	81.0%

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Inside	11 to 20, 29	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
South Outside	21 to 27, 121 to 127	9.5%	9.5%	1.0%	80.0% ^a	0.0%

Notes on Coho allocations (south):

^{TBD} currently no directed fisheries in this area. Will be reviewed should future directed opportunity develop.

Principles to be drafted regarding how to distribute impacts.

^a Coho taken primarily in offshore fisheries

CHINOOK

Description	Areas	Seine A	Gill Net C	Troll F
Northern BC AABM Chinook	1, 2E, 2W, 101-105, 130, 142	*	*	100.0% ^a
Central	6 to 10	*	100.0% ^b	* ^c

NEW PRODUCTION AREA STARTED IN 2015

Description	Areas	Seine A	Gill Net C	Troll F
North-Inside	3 to 5	*	100.0% ^d	*

Notes on Chinook allocations (north):

* bycatch provisions

^a Northern BC AABM Chinook harvest

^b near-terminal fisheries (primarily hatchery origin)

^c review potential re-entry of troll into Production Areas 6 + 7. Bycatch provisions

^d bycatch provision and near-terminal directed fisheries (e.g., Skeena)

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South- Inside	11 to 20, 29	1.0% ^e	3.0%	90.0% ^f	0.0%	6.0%
South – WCVI AABM Chinook	21, 23 to 27, 121 to 127	*	*	0.0%	100.0% ^g	0.0%

NEW PRODUCTION AREA STARTED IN 2015

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South- WCVI Inside	21 to 27	5.0% ^h	75.0% ⁱ	5.0% ⁱ	15.0% ^j	0.0%

Notes on Chinook allocations (south):

^e subject review pending completion of southern BC Chinook initiative

^f directed Fraser Chinook fishery

^g this is WCVI AABM Chinook fishery

^h Area 23 sharing arrangement currently 33.3% seine: 66.7% gill net. May need to review

ⁱ Area 25 fishery (potential for future review. 75% fishery to Area D (e.g., Conuma Bay fishery); potential 5% to Area E if future surplus at Nitinat; otherwise default to Area D)

^j winter troll fishery

12.4 CONSERVATION MEASURES

12.4.1 SELECTIVE FISHING

The Department will work with Area Harvest Committee representatives to implement selective fishing measures to avoid non-target fish or, if encountered, to release them alive and unharmed. These measures include but are not limited to: the use of troll plugs, Alaska twist gill nets, maximum gill net set time and net length, gill net mesh size, gill net depth, seine bunt mesh size, brailing and sorting for seine vessels, and revival tanks.

12.4.2 ROBSON BIGHT

DFO will once again be seeking the co-operation of harvesters in minimizing fishing activities in Robson Bight. This is part of a long-term management plan to afford protection to the killer whale populations that frequent this area during periods from mid-May to early October. Fish harvesters are requested not to moor in the Robson Bight area. Information on this management initiative can also be obtained from Department charter patrol vessels on the grounds and from Fisheries and Oceans Canada offices.

12.4.3 ROCKFISH CONSERVATION MEASURES IN SALMON TROLL

YELLOWEYE ROCKFISH

Information on the Yelloweye Rockfish is available in Appendix 9 of the [Groundfish IFMP](#).

12.5 COMMERCIAL DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES

The Department has conducted extensive consultations with the commercial salmon industry and First Nations concerning fisheries reform and renewal. Changes in the fishery will be designed to improve biological and economic performance of the fishery.

In an ever-changing environment such as resource conservation, a group may want to explore special harvesting initiatives or new management approaches to develop flexible fisheries with greater harvester control that improve product quality, increase value to the fleet and have better catch monitoring and compliance with catch limits.

The Department is interested in continuing to explore innovative ways to access TAC more efficiently, to increase market value of the product, or to access TAC that may be unavailable due to conservation concerns or that a full fleet fishery is unable to access.

To contribute to the Pacific Fisheries Reform vision, the Department will consider demonstration projects that support alternative management strategies that:

- Maintains or improves management control and conservation performance in the fishery;
- Promotes the use of clearly defined shares to improve manageability and industry viability; and
- Increases the ability of harvesters to work cooperatively to harvest available surpluses and to take on greater responsibility for control and monitoring of their fishery.

Details regarding demonstration fisheries that the department is considering are contained in [Appendix 4](#).

In addition to existing demonstration fisheries within Section 13, additional opportunities to demonstrate flexible harvest arrangements were initiated in 2016 in support of updates to the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework (CSAF). Guidelines and principles associated with CSAF as well as a list of CSAF demonstration fisheries are included in [Appendix 4](#).

12.5.1 TRANSFER GUIDELINES FOR THE TEMPORARY TRANSFER OF COMMERCIAL SALMON SHARES

In consideration of discussions with the First Nations SCC, the CSAB and any feedback received, these guidelines will be reviewed and may be updated annually.

These guidelines address the transfer of commercial salmon shares between the following groups:

- Area A-H Fishery participants with a defined percentage share of the commercial TAC
- Area A-H fleets or portions of fleets or individual licences
- Marine Demonstration Fishery participants
- In-river Demonstration Fishery participants
- First Nations with one or more Area A-H licences
- First Nations entities who are signatories to current arrangements or area provided communal licences allowing sale that provides a defined commercial share of salmon for the given year including;
 - Economic Opportunity agreements
 - Harvest Agreements
 - Demonstration Fisheries

Transfers of harvest shares may occur when there is a formal arrangement outlining possibilities as defined by the Guiding Principles and Operational Considerations below, (approved by DFO) between the original share-holders and the recipient. Requests can include transfer from downstream to upstream locations, and vice versa. These arrangements should identify mechanisms pre-season that will be used for transfers to ensure proper management and accounting of shares (Actual transfers may occur in-season; e.g., between ITQ fishery participants using established transfer request processes). For transfers of commercial licences, arrangements will need to be made in advance of the fishery opening for which the transfer is intended to apply to ensure appropriate allocations associated with the licence can be set aside.

In-season proposals to transfer uncaught commercial Total Allowable Catch (TAC) allocations between the above groups will be reviewed and DFO will determine whether to allow the transfer of some or all of the uncaught TAC.

Requests for temporary transfers of commercial salmon shares will be reviewed with consideration to the following general principles and the operational considerations identified below.

Guiding Principles for Temporary Transfer of Salmon Shares:

- Result in similar or better management control and/or conservation performance in the fishery (both for target and bycatch species/stocks)
- Consistent with conservation measures and allocation approaches (if any) for stocks of concern, including bycatch species/stocks;
- Respect existing Aboriginal and treaty rights and the priority of Food, Social and Ceremonial access.
- Consistent with international obligations;
- Consistent with objectives and management measures outlined in Salmon Integrated Fishery Management Plans;
- Respect the Common property nature of the fisheries resource: subject to Principle 3, access to the resource does not imply ownership of the resource or any portion of the resource, and is not conferred irrevocably to individuals.
- Support opportunities to utilize Canadian commercial total allowable catch while respecting conservation requirements.
- First Nations commercial fisheries and Area A-H commercial fisheries conducted in tidal waters will be managed under common and transparent rules for each gear type. For example, First Nations commercial troll fisheries conducted in tidal waters where Area F licences are permitted to operate will be managed in accordance with the same rules as the Area F commercial fishery for those tidal waters.
- First Nations commercial fisheries conducted in non-tidal waters will be managed under transparent rules that are consistent with the rules used to manage marine commercial fisheries that target similar stocks associated with that production area.
- Affordable to implement i.e. would not result in any substantive incremental costs to DFO in areas such as monitoring stock assessment and enforcement.

Operational Considerations Regarding Requests for Temporary Transfers:

- Transfers of commercial salmon allocation shares will only occur when there is a Canadian commercial Total Allowable Catch (TAC) (i.e., commercial harvestable surplus) identified for the target stock or species which is available for harvest.

- Transfers of commercial salmon shares between parties will only be considered for commercial fisheries and commercial participants with a clearly defined percentage share of the Canadian commercial total allowable catch.
- In most cases, transfers will be based on a percentage share of the available commercial TAC. Alternate approaches for calculating transfer shares may be considered.
- In-season transfers may occur if pre-season plans outline possibilities. For share transfers between Area A-H commercial fisheries, individual salmon shareholders or groups of salmon shareholders; the mechanism (e.g., tracking, management and accounting of shares) for facilitating transfers needs to be described and agreed upon by all parties to the arrangement and DFO pre-season. Individual commercial licence holders or groups of commercial licence holders will not be permitted to make their own allocation transfer arrangements unless these are part of a pre-season plan approved by the Department.
- DFO will not be responsible for leading or facilitating the negotiation of transfer arrangements between parties.
- For commercial salmon licences held by the Department, individual licence allocations will be based on an equal percentage allocation of the commercial TAC for all licences in that commercial licence area (i.e., Areas A to H).
- If, despite the best efforts of any commercial harvest group, it becomes apparent that it will be unable to harvest its share, and no mechanisms are in place that would permit the transfer of the share to another commercial harvest group, the Department may consider transfers of uncaught commercial harvest shares to any other commercial harvest group already holding a clearly defined percentage share of the Canadian commercial total allowable catch, on a case by case basis, assuming that harvest can occur using fishing methods, times and locations permitted for that commercial harvest group.
- Transfers of commercial salmon allocations must consider shares of all stocks that will be harvested in the recipient area.
 - Allocations transferred inland will be reduced proportionately to reflect the reduced stock composition in the more terminal harvest location (e.g., Area F troll licence shares allocated to the Kamloops Lake inland demo fishery will be only for the proportion of Thompson Chinook encountered in the marine commercial troll fishery). Alternative approaches may be considered in specific circumstances (e.g., allocation may not be proportionally reduced if

harvest of an allocation in a terminal area reduces impact on stocks of conservation concern). DFO will document the rationale for its decision and make it publicly available.

- For co-migrating stocks or management units of concern or where little or no Commercial TAC has been identified, transfers will need to consider and/or mitigate potential impacts. For example: access to a harvest share of Fraser Pink Salmon might require the fishing group or individuals to have some Sockeye remaining in their harvest share of co-migrating Fraser Sockeye.
- For co-migrating stocks/species or management units of concern where exploitation rate caps or some other limit on mortalities have been defined (e.g. Interior Fraser River Coho), the parties to the transfer arrangements are responsible for demonstrating that the transfer arrangement will be neutral or of benefit to the stock or management unit of concern (i.e. same or lower impact in the new fishing area). Limiting stocks/species will only be transferred to the extent needed to harvest the target stock transfer amount with residual amounts being available for the use by all other commercial harvest groups with a share of the targeted stocks.
- Transfers into areas that require management adjustments need to be accounted for in determining TAC (e.g., a similar accounting process to current Fraser Sockeye).
- Priority will be given to those proposals that allow shares to be harvested using fishing techniques that are more selective than the original technique, and / or allow harvesting in fishing areas that avoid stocks or management units of concern.
- Harvest of commercial salmon allocations is not guaranteed and actual harvest opportunities may be limited by constraints to protect species or stocks of concern. Commercial fishery participants that demonstrate an ability to fish selectively may be able to access a greater amount of their harvest share.
- Enhanced fisheries monitoring and catch reporting programs must be in place for participants to ensure that there is reliable accounting for both retained and released fish and that harvests do not exceed defined shares. Incremental monitoring costs will not be assumed by DFO, and will need to be covered by parties to the transfer arrangement.

- Proposals for transfer arrangement must include contingencies for situations where shares are exceeded. Parties not complying with agreed-to arrangements could face enforcement actions.
- Transfers of commercial salmon shares will not be permitted when this may adversely affect First Nations Food, Social and Ceremonial harvest opportunities in the area.
- Surpluses of salmon in terminal areas (i.e., ESSR fisheries) will continue to be managed using existing ESSR guidelines.

All decisions regarding temporary salmon share transfers are one-time only. Unless otherwise communicated by DFO at the time of the decision, all future transfer requests must undergo new process of application, review and approval from DFO.

For clarity, in season transfers of AABM Chinook CTAC may be considered between interested parties in accordance with the transfer guidelines outlined in section 12.5.1

13 SPECIES SPECIFIC SALMON FISHING PLANS

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13.1 SOUTHERN CHINOOK SALMON FISHING PLAN

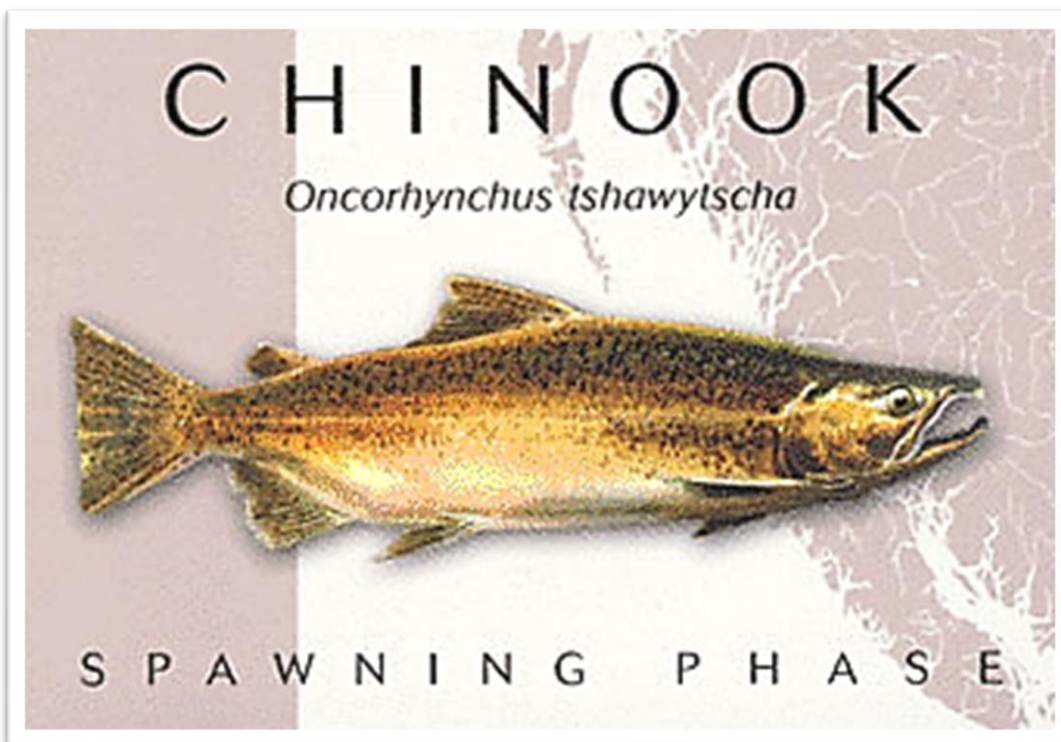
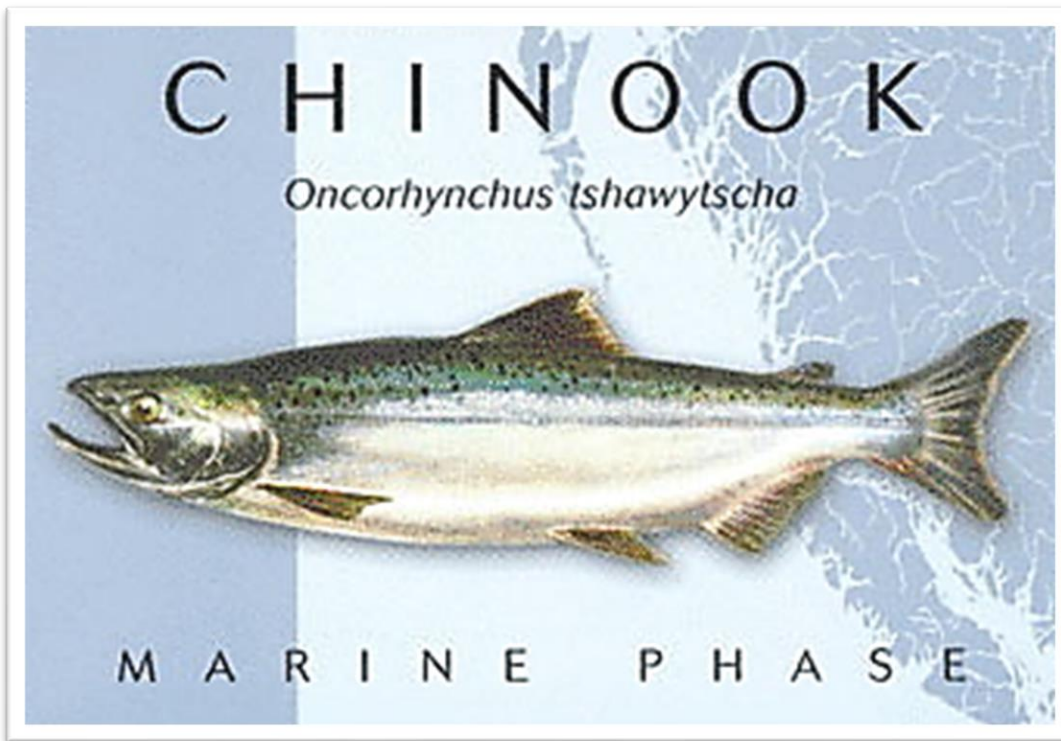


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13.1.1 SOUTHERN CHINOOK OVERVIEW

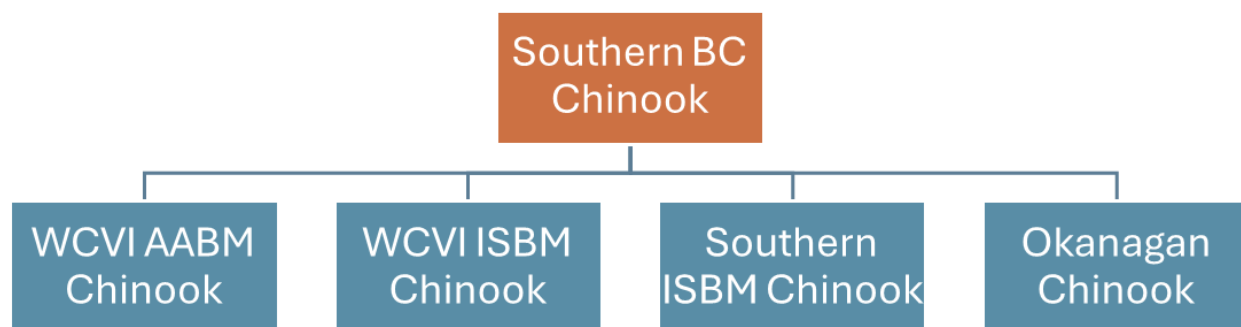


Figure 13-1: Overview of Southern BC Chinook

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Chinook Salmon fisheries in BC are managed under the umbrella of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST). Domestic considerations are also in place for stocks of concern, allocation between sectors of the fishery, and application of selective fishing practices.

With the exception of the Transboundary Rivers, the basis for managing fisheries impacting Chinook Salmon from Alaska to Oregon is the Chinook abundance-based management system in Chapter 3 of the PST. This management system was adopted in 1999 and defined harvests of Chinook through 2008. Chapter 3 of the PST outlines the abundance-based management framework established under the 1999 Agreement for management of Chinook fisheries. This chapter expired in 2018 and renewed provisions are in effect as of January 1, 2019.

Further explanation and the text of the Chinook salmon agreements can be found on the PSC website at: <http://www.psc.org/publications/pacific-salmon-treaty/>

Chinook Salmon AABM fisheries under the PST are accounted for during the Chinook year, which begins on October 1 in one calendar year to September 30 in the next calendar year.

Two types of fisheries are identified in the PST under Chapter 3:

Aggregate Abundance Based Management (AABM) fisheries; and

Individual Stock Based Management (ISBM) fisheries.

Within the PST Chinook management framework, Canadian domestic policy further defines fishing opportunities. The domestic objectives or policies which will most affect fishing opportunities include: conservation, Canada's constitutional obligations to First Nations, the WSP, *An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon*, and the *Policy for Selective Fishing in Canada's Pacific Fisheries*.

FRASER RIVER CHINOOK CONSERVATION CONCERNS:

This section of the IFMP outlines conservation measures for Fraser River Chinook. Management measures for the season are outlined through Section 13 or can be found via fisheries notice or <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/index-eng.html>.

Overview: AABM Fisheries

AABM fisheries are mixed-stock fisheries that intercept and catch migratory Chinook from many Canada- and U.S.-origin populations.

In Southern BC, AABM applies to Chinook-directed fisheries in the following Areas and times on the WCVI:

Areas 21, 23 and 24 and Areas 121, 123, 124 during the period October 16 through July 31, plus that portion of Areas 21, 121, 123, 124 outside of a line one nautical mile seaward of the surfline, during the period August 1 through October 15;

Areas 25, 26, 27 and Areas 125, 126, 127 during the period from October 16 through June 30, plus that portion of Areas 125, 126, 127 outside of a line one nautical mile seaward from surfline, during the period from July 1 through October 15.

These fisheries are managed to an annual total allowable catch based on a forecast abundance index (AI) of the aggregate of stocks that contribute to the fishery. All other areas and times are managed as ISBM fisheries.

Overview: ISBM Fisheries

In response to conservation concerns for Chinook in both countries, several changes were made to PST Chapter 3 (Chinook), including targeted harvest reductions in both Canadian and U.S. fisheries and adoption of a new metric (the calendar year exploitation rate or CYER) to manage and evaluate performance in specific Canadian and U.S. individual stock-based management (ISBM) or “inside” fisheries. The agreement identifies reductions of up to 12.5% from 2009-2015 levels for specified Canadian and U.S. indicator populations in Canadian ISBM fisheries.

Table 13–1: Indicator stocks, ISBM fishery limits, and management objectives applicable to Canadian ISBM fisheries

Stock Region	Escapement Indicator Stock (CWT Indicator Stock)	Management Objective	Canadian ISBM CYER Limit
BC	Skeena (KLM)	TBD	0.147
	Atnarko (ATN)	5,009	0.276

Stock Region	Escapement Indicator Stock (CWT Indicator Stock)	Management Objective	Canadian ISBM CYER Limit
	NWVI Natural Aggregate (Colonial-Cayeagle, Tashish, Artlish, Kaouk) (RBT adj)	TBD	0.091
	SWVI Natural Aggregate (Bedwell-Ursus, Megin, Moyeha) (RBT adj)	TBD	0.091
	East Vancouver Island North (TBD) (QUI adj)	TBD	0.157
	Phillips (TBD)	TBD	0.097
	Cowichan (COW)	6,500	0.419
	Nicola (NIC)	TBD	0.167
	Chilcotin (in development)	TBD	NA
	Chilko (CKO in development)	TBD	NA
	Lower Shuswap (SHU)	12,300	0.200
	Harrison (HAR)	75,100	0.109
	Canadian Okanagan (SUM adj)	TBD	NA
WA/OR/ID	Nooksack Spring (NSF)	TBD	0.149
	Skagit Spring (SKF)	690	0.079
	Skagit Summer/Fall (SSF)	9,202	0.088
	Stillaguamish (STL)	TBD	0.128

Stock Region	Escapement Indicator Stock (CWT Indicator Stock)	Management Objective	Canadian ISBM CYER Limit
	Snohomish (SKY)	TBD	0.092

ISBM management regimes apply to all Chinook Salmon fisheries subject to the PST that are not AABM fisheries and include marine and freshwater salmon fisheries from northern British Columbia to northern Oregon coast. ISBM fisheries in southern BC include First Nations fisheries in both marine and fresh waters, recreational fisheries, WCVI seine and gill net, and Fraser River gill net.

Recent Canadian ISBM fisheries have exceeded the Canadian ISBM CYER limit for Snohomish. An updated estimate of impacts will be conducted before the final IFMP is completed. If Canada remains over the limit, actions will be taken in fisheries with higher impacts on Snohomish Chinook to reduce impacts in order to meet Canada's obligations under the PST.

13.1.1.1 SOUTHERN CHINOOK ENHANCEMENT INFORMATION

The major DFO operation enhancement facilities that produce Chinook are:

South Coast Area:

- Big Qualicum River hatchery
- Conuma River hatchery
- Little Qualicum River hatchery
- Nitinat River hatchery
- Puntledge River hatchery
- Quinsam River hatchery
- Robertson Creek hatchery

Fraser River Area:

- Capilano River hatchery
- Chehalis River hatchery
- Chilliwack River hatchery
- Inch Creek hatchery
- Shuswap Falls hatchery

- Spius Creek hatchery
- Tenderfoot Creek hatchery

SEP Production Plans and Post-Season Production Data

The following website contains links to summaries of the most recent years' Post-Season Production from DFO and DFO-partnered hatcheries, as well as the current version of the SEP Production Plan. Note that from February to June each year the Production Plan is in draft form and is subject to change. From June to the following February, the Final Production Plan is available.

[IFMP SEP Data Tables | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ifmp-sep/DataTables/PacificRegion/FisheriesandOceansCanada/dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

13.1.1.2 SOUTHERN BC CHINOOK – SEP UPDATES

Fraser and Interior Area Chinook

Upper Fraser River Chinook at Quesnel River Research Center

The 2026 Production Plan includes production of seven Upper Fraser Chinook stocks at the Quesnel River Research Center (QRRRC) Hatchery. These stocks were initially enhanced in response to the Big Bar landslide, with program funding tied to landslide mitigation and later to the Pacific Salmon Strategic Initiative (PSSI). Ongoing funding for this program is currently uncertain.

Lower Chilcotin Chinook

SEP will be pausing the trial enhancement program on Lower Chilcotin Chinook in 2026. Since 2020, the Department has enhanced this stock on a pilot basis to evaluate its feasibility as a CWT indicator for Fraser Spring 5₂ Chinook under the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST). SEP now has a good understanding of the logistics, operational requirements, and biological risks involved in enhancing this stock for Assessment purposes. Hatchery production of this stock will now pause until adequate facility capacity, infrastructure, and resourcing are available to produce this stock in a manner that minimizes these risks. SEP is strongly committed to the success of the PST CWT Indicator Program and will continue work to develop a long-term indicator for the Fraser Spring 5₂ Chinook Management Unit.

Additional enhancement projects that are currently being implemented to aid in Chinook stock recovery efforts in the Fraser area include:

- Maria Slough Chinook (Chehalis Hatchery)
- Portage Cr Chinook (Tenderfoot Hatchery)
- Bridge R Chinook (N'Quatqua FN Hatchery)

- Nechako R Chinook (Spruce City Wildlife Association)
- Swift Cr Chinook (Spruce City Wildlife Association)
- Spius Cr Chinook (Spius Hatchery)
- Salmon R Chinook (Spius Hatchery)
- Coldwater R Chinook (Spius Hatchery)

DFO continues to assess options to increase the size of Fraser Chinook coded-wire tag release tag groups to support Pacific Salmon Treaty implementation and assessment, given existing constraints on resources, and the increasing need to support conservation and rebuilding requirements.

South Coast Area Chinook

- Mass marking (adipose fin-clipping) projects are planned to continue for Sarita River, San Juan River, Gold River, Robertson Creek, Conuma River, Clemens Creek, Salmon River and Thornton Creek populations.
- Marble River Chinook – The release target for Marble River Chinook will be reduced from 1M to 690k to align with rearing capacity of the facility.
- Lang Creek Chinook – The release target for Lang Creek Chinook will be reduced to 475k (500k egg target) to align with Powell River Salmon Society’s operational target. The release location has been changed, all production is to be released below anadromous barriers to reduce ecological impacts, including competition with natal trout species.
- WCVI Chinook – DFO worked with First Nations to support the development of WCVI Nations’ long-term biological goals for Chinook populations influenced by enhancement. This initiative was a new pilot action under the Pacific Hatchery Adaptation Strategy and a component of the WCVI Chinook Rebuilding Plan. Background information, along with the process and results, including a complete list of population-specific goals, are provided here: https://publications.gc.ca/site/archivee-archived.html?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpublications.gc.ca%2Fcollections%2Fcollection_2025%2Fmpo-dfo%2FFs144-87-2025-eng.pdf

13.1.2 WCVI AABM CHINOOK

13.1.2.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

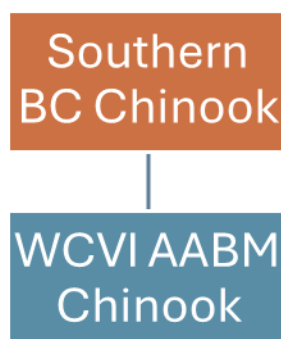


Figure 13–2: Overview of WCVI AABM Chinook

The AABM fishery includes First Nations, recreational, and commercial fisheries targeting Chinook in offshore WCVI Areas 121 to 127 and seasonally (prior to June/July and after September) in inshore Areas 21 and 23 to 27 (including a 1 nautical mile strip seaward of the surfline in the adjacent offshore areas). Catch and effort peaks in Areas 121 to 127 during the months of June – August, and effort is largely abundance driven and weather-dependent.

The WCVI AABM Chinook fishery targets Canadian and U.S. origin wild and enhanced Chinook populations that migrate past the WCVI. The main components of the harvest are U.S.-origin Chinook; however, most southern BC Chinook conservation units can also be encountered in this area. While some Chinook harvested in the WCVI AABM fishery are returning to spawn in WCVI watersheds, most of these Chinook are migrating to Washington, Oregon, or other parts of southern British Columbia to spawn.

13.1.2.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Pre-season

The PSC Chinook Technical Committee (CTC) provides a final calibration of the Chinook Model annually. That calibration is provided in April each year, and provides Abundance Indices (AI) for the three AABM fishing areas: WCVI, South East Alaska (SEAK), and Northern BC (NBC). Table 1 in PST Chapter 3 converts the AI to the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for each AABM fishing area for the fishing year from the previous October 1 until September 30 in the year of the calibration.

Effective January 1, 2019 the renegotiated PST terms were put into effect including an up to a 12.5% reduction in the West Coast Vancouver Island AABM Total Allowable Catch (TAC). The

level of reduction is based on the AI. The allowable catches for the AABM fisheries are included in Table 13–2.

Table 13–2: The 2026 SEAK, NBC and WCVI pre-season Abundance indices and associated allowable catches for AABM fisheries.

	SEAK	NBC	WCVI
Abundance Index	1.41	1.36	1.06
Allowable Catch	207,400	164,600	119,800

In-season

There is currently no in-season assessment of abundance completed for Canadian AABM fisheries. All Canadian fisheries are managed based on the pre-season AI and associated pre-season TACs.

13.1.2.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

An AABM fishery is an abundance-based management regime that constrains catch or total mortality to a numerical limit computed from either a pre-season forecast or an in-season estimate of abundance, from which a harvest rate index can be calculated, expressed as a proportion of the 1979 to 1982 base period.

AABM fisheries are managed annually so as not to exceed the TAC. In addition, domestic conservation concerns may reduce overall harvests below the PST TAC.

When there is a TAC identified for the AABM management area, targeted Chinook fisheries are planned for First Nations, recreational, and commercial sectors.

The commercial TAC is calculated by subtracting the expected Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) catch (10,000 Chinook was used in recent years), the Maa-nulth treaty allocation (calculated annually based on the TAC), a share for the five Nations to exercise their Aboriginal right to fish and sell fish (calculated annually based on the Canadian TAC), and the expected recreational catch.

The WCVI AABM recreational catch from the previous 2 years has been between ~41,000 and ~43,000 Chinook.

New for 2026-27: Given the recent catches by the recreational fishery, DFO is raising the pre-season recreational expected catch for planning purposes from 40,000 to 45,000.

Adjustments to the commercial harvest level may be made in-season in response to differences between expected and observed recreational catches.

13.1.2.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO AABM CHINOOK FISHERIES

AABM fisheries may be managed to avoid domestic stocks of concern outlined in Table 13–3.

Table 13–3: Risk of Impact on Stocks of Concern

Fishery Period	Risk of impact on stocks of concern
Nov – Feb	Low risk. Fisheries in October are outside the migration period and area for several stocks of concern, including Interior Fraser River Coho, WCVI Chinook, Fraser River Spring 4 ₂ , Fraser River Spring, Summer 5 ₂ Chinook, and Interior Fraser River Steelhead. Catch will be comprised of fish returning in subsequent calendar year or later. The majority of the Chinook catch will be of stocks of U.S. and lower Fraser River origin.
Mar – May	High risk. Specific concerns for Fraser River Spring 4 ₂ , Fraser River Spring and Summer 5 ₂ Chinook. Increased incidence of Lower Strait of Georgia (LGS) Chinook especially in May.
June – July	High risk. Potential concern for impacts on Fraser River Spring 4 ₂ , Fraser River Spring and Summer 5 ₂ Chinook in June and July. Monitoring of Coho encounters beginning in early to mid-June is required. Stocks of concern, including Interior Fraser River Coho are present. Concerns for impacts on LGS Chinook.
Aug – mid-Sep	High Risk. Concerns for Interior Fraser River Coho, and WCVI Chinook. Reduced impacts on Fraser Spring and Summer Chinook populations.
mid-Sep – Oct	High risk. Concerns for Interior Fraser River Steelhead in this period. WCVI Chinook may be avoided by area restrictions. Concerns for impacts on LGS Chinook and Interior Fraser River Coho impacts are reduced because they are at the end of their migration out of WCVI area.

Given current Interior Fraser River Steelhead escapement trends and the assessment of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as *Endangered* by COSEWIC, DFO is implementing a comprehensive, precautionary approach to the management of all fisheries in southern BC that

are likely to impact these stocks of concern. A 27-day rolling window closure will be applied to commercial troll fisheries, according to the dates and areas outlined in Table 13–4. The IFR Steelhead measures will not extend to marine FSC/Domestic Treaty harvest, five Nations sale fisheries, or recreational fisheries.

Table 13–4: Summary of management actions anticipated in WCVI AABM Chinook fisheries to limit impacts on stocks of concern

Stock of Concern	First Nations FSC and Treaty Fishery	Five Nations Multi-Species Fishery	Recreational Fishery	Commercial Fishery (Area G and Maa-nulth ICEF)
WCVI Chinook	Harvest levels outlined in harvest documents and communal licences.	On-going terminal area restrictions for wild stocks of concern. Management measures may include a combination of fin fish closures and salmon non-retention areas.	On-going terminal area restrictions for wild stocks of concern. Management measures may include a combination of daily limits, annual limits, size limits, fin fish closures and salmon non-retention areas.	WCVI - Time and area closures on WCVI (i.e., avoid inshore fisheries during the time period July to September). New for 2026-2027: Springtime inshore demonstration fishery closes early in NWVI.

Stock of Concern	First Nations FSC and Treaty Fishery	Five Nations Multi-Species Fishery	Recreational Fishery	Commercial Fishery (Area G and Maa-nulth ICEF)
Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook	Harvest levels outlined in harvest documents and communal licences. Additional biological sampling requested prior to July 15.	Offshore* AABM Chinook directed fisheries closed from April 1 – July 14. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline Maximum 80cm size limit from July 15-July 31.	Offshore* WCVI recreational fisheries closed to Chinook retention from April 1 – July 14. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline Maximum 80cm size limit from July 15-July 31.	Time and area closures and effort limits. Springtime demo fishery will be limited to inshore waters* and a limited TAC of 4,000 pieces. Approval of this fishery and the potential for an increase to the TAC is dependent on review of results from recent years. Summer fishery closed until August 10th. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline

Stock of Concern	First Nations FSC and Treaty Fishery	Five Nations Multi-Species Fishery	Recreational Fishery	Commercial Fishery (Area G and Maa-nulth ICEF)
Fraser River Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook	Harvest levels outlined in harvest documents and communal licences. Additional biological sampling requested prior to July 15.	Offshore* AABM Chinook directed fisheries closed from April 1 – July 14. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline Maximum 80cm size limit from July 15-July 31.	Offshore* recreational fisheries closed to Chinook retention from April 1 – July 14. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline Maximum 80cm size limit from July 15-July 31.	Time and area closures and effort limits. Springtime demo fishery will be limited to inshore waters* and a limited TAC of 4,000 pieces. Summer fishery closed until August 10. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline
Lower Strait of Georgia Chinook	Harvest levels outlined in harvest documents and communal licences	Offshore* AABM Chinook directed fisheries closed from April 1 – July 14. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline	Offshore* recreational fisheries closed to Chinook retention from April 1 – July 14. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline	AABM harvest rate reductions have reduced impact on LGS Chinook. Springtime demo fishery will be limited to inshore waters* and a limited TAC of 4,000 pieces. *Excluding 1 nm seaward of surfline

Stock of Concern	First Nations FSC and Treaty Fishery	Five Nations Multi-Species Fishery	Recreational Fishery	Commercial Fishery (Area G and Maa-nulth ICEF)
South Coast Coho (Interior Fraser River Coho management objective)	Harvest levels outlined in harvest documents and communal licences.	Coho retention limited to selective hatchery mark fishery prior to mid-September in offshore waters. Retention of wild Coho after September 15 offshore and in inshore areas subject to allocations identified in the Five Nations Multi Species FMP.	Coho retention limited to mark-selective fisheries (MSF) in most areas. Retention of wild Coho in inside waters on the WCVI may be considered subject to presence of IFR Coho and local abundance of WCVI Coho.	Considerations for Coho retention after mid-September in WCVI troll fisheries when stocks of concern have migrated out of the area*. *Superseded by IFR Steelhead measures.
Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead	No measures for WCVI FSC fisheries	No measures for five Nations multi-species sale fishery.	No measures for WCVI recreational fisheries.	27-day moving window closure for commercial troll fisheries in A123 to A127 and portions of Area 26 and Area 27. See Table 13-5 and Appendix 7 for details

13.1.2.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.1.2.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food Social and Ceremonial

New for 2026-2027: Based on preliminary pre-season fishing plans from the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations, the expected FSC catch for WCVI First Nations is reduced from 10,000 to 5,000 Chinook.

Refer to Section 10.2 for Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts in southern BC/Fraser River First Nations Fisheries. Note that AABM and ISBM Chinook amounts are combined.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. If a commercial vessel is used for fishing under this licence, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by the vessel to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours of the landing of fish harvested from that vessel. Catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

To improve the collective understanding of stocks of concern, in terms of their migration routes, timing and fisheries impacts, First Nations are encouraged to collaborate with the Department on shaping a catch monitoring and biological sampling plan for fisheries between April 1 and July 15 to provide stock composition information for Chinook.

Treaty Fisheries

WCVI Treaty fisheries for AABM Chinook will not be affected by the Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Maa-nulth Fisheries (Domestic)

The Domestic allocations for salmon under the Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement are “an amount of Ocean Chinook Salmon equal to 1,875 pieces plus 1.78% of the Ocean Chinook Salmon Canadian Total Allowable Catch.”

For the previous Chinook year the Maa-nulth allocation of Ocean Chinook was 3,913. This year the allocation is 4,007.

The Maa-nulth First Nations provide electronic catch reports to the Department. The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing dates, location of harvest, species harvested, harvest effort, and catch (in pieces).

To improve the collective understanding of stocks of concern, in terms of their migration routes, timing and fisheries impacts, First Nations are encouraged to collaborate with the Department on shaping a catch monitoring and biological sampling plan for fisheries between April 1 and July 15 to provide stock composition information for Chinook.

Five Nations (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations) Multi-species Fishery

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island - Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined fishing territories and to sell that fish. The Five Nations allocation is 16.91% of the available catch remaining after requirements for FSC and Treaty have been deducted from the WCVI AABM CTAC. The five Nations right-based sale allocation is therefore 18,735. The five Nations share may be adjusted if the shares associated with additional Area G licences are added to the fishery. For further information please see Section 10.3.1.

The five Nations (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht) Multi-species commercial fishery will be delayed until July 15 in areas seaward of 1 nautical mile from the surfline on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Measures following this delayed opening will be a maximum 80 cm size limit from July 15 to July 31. Fishing may be authorized in areas shoreward of 1 nautical mile from the surfline prior to July 15.

13.1.2.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

The recreational total annual limit for Chinook from any tidal waters is 10 Chinook per year. Recreational anglers must record all Chinook retained catch either on their licence, or if mobile internet access is immediately available, the licence holder may alternatively record catch immediately in their National Recreational Licensing System (NRLS) account.

The AABM recreational fishery includes all catch in northwest WCVI (Areas 25 to 27, 125 to 127) from October 16 to June 30, and the catch offshore outside of one nautical mile seaward of surfline from July 1 to October 15, plus all the catch in southwest WCVI (Areas 21, 23, 24, 121, 123, and 124) from October 16 through July 31, and the catch offshore, outside of one nautical mile seaward of the surfline from August 1 to October 15.

Updates to recreational fisheries are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website at: <http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>.

Allocation

For pre-season planning purposes the AABM recreational fishery is expected to catch 45,000 Chinook (see 13.1.2.3 for further details). If the recreational harvest is forecast in-season to be less than or greater than the pre-season expected catch, the commercial TAC will be adjusted to account for the difference.

Recreational Conservation Measures

As a result of concerns for WCVI Chinook that emerged in the mid-late 1990s, a suite of management measures was implemented on the WCVI intended to protect wild WCVI Chinook from recreational fishing pressure. These management measures fluctuated yearly with levels and areas of restriction. In 2000, a recreational fishery “Chinook management corridor”, extending one nautical mile offshore from the surfline was put in place along the West Coast of Vancouver Island in order to reduce the exploitation rate on adult female Chinook that migrate along the coastline back to their natal WCVI streams. The surfline is defined in Schedule 1 of the *Pacific Fishery Management Area Regulations*, 2007. From 2006 to 2015 the suite of management measures remained relatively stable with very few local changes.

Management measures were modified in 2016 to focus fisheries on zones of high hatchery production, ensure small systems are provided protection through terminal finfish closures, and simplify regulations for improved compliance, enforceability, assessment, and angler education.

The WCVI Chinook management measures introduced in 2016 remain in effect. Minor modifications may be considered in the pre-season planning process.

Since 2019, WCVI Areas 121, 123-127 seaward of 1 nautical mile outside of the surfline are Chinook non-retention from April 1 to July 14 in efforts to address conservation concerns for Fraser River Chinook Salmon. Furthermore, a maximum size limit was in place from July 15 to 31. Since 2023 the daily retention limit was reduced from two (2) to one (1) in PFMA’s 121 and 123 during this period.

More information on approved Fraser River Chinook management plans can be found in Section 13.1.5.1.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

13.1.2.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

AABM commercial Chinook fisheries take place annually and may be permitted in Areas 23 to 27, and Areas 123 to 127.

Within the bounds of the PST provisions, commercial troll Chinook fisheries will be managed to limit impacts on domestic stocks of concern, including Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook, Fraser River Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook, WCVI wild Chinook, LGS Chinook, and Interior Fraser River Coho, and Interior Fraser River Steelhead.

Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook, Fraser River Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook stocks are present on the WCVI during the spring and summer period, most prevalently when they landfall on their migration back to the Fraser River. To protect returning Fraser Chinook stocks of concern, the Area G troll spring fishery is closed in the offshore waters of the WCVI.

A 27-day rolling window closure to the Area G troll fishery will also be implemented in 2026 to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead. Areas and dates for this window closure are listed in Table 13–5. Terminal fisheries targeting terminal abundance that are understood to not be on the migration route of IFR Steelhead may be excluded from conservation measures. See [Appendix 7](#) for details on these terminal areas.

Table 13–5: Interior Fraser River Steelhead Rolling Window Closure Dates for Area G Troll Fishery

Area Details	Start	End
Area 123	16-Sep	12-Oct
Area 124	13-Sep	9-Oct
Area 125	11-Sep	7-Oct
Area 26-11	8-Sep	4-Oct
Area 126	8-Sep	4-Oct

Area Details	Start	End
Areas 27-1 and 27-2 westerly of a line from Cape Parkins (50 degrees 26.6395 N, 128 degrees 02.8157 W) to Kwakiutl Point (50 degrees 21.0552 N, 127 degrees 59.4362 W), 27-4 to 27-6	6-Sep	2-Oct
Area 127	6-Sep	2-Oct

Lower Georgia Strait (LGS) Chinook identified by coded-wire tagged Cowichan River Chinook are broadly distributed in time and area along the WCVI. A number of management approaches have been utilized in previous troll fisheries to limit impacts on LGS Chinook. It is anticipated that the substantial reduction in commercial harvests under the 2009 and 2019 PST agreements should continue to provide sufficient protection for LGS Chinook.

WCVI wild Chinook continues to be a stock of concern. As a result, management measures consistent with previous years will be implemented to protect this stock. The objective for commercial troll fisheries will be to avoid encounters with WCVI Chinook by restricting the troll fishery to offshore areas during the summer period. Specifically, there will be a 5 nautical mile inside boundary in Areas 123 to 126 and a 2 nautical mile boundary in Area 127 and sub-Area 126-4 during the period when WCVI Chinook return to the West Coast of the island. If further restrictions are required for conservation purposes, zone/area and time closures may be implemented.

New for 2026-2027: The Springtime inshore demonstration fishery will close early on May 1 in Areas 25-27 (NWVI).

Allocation

Table 13–6: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South - WCVI AABM Chinook	23 to 27, 123 to 127	*	*	0.0%	100.0% [§]	0.0%

Notes on Chinook allocations:

* bycatch provisions

[§] this is WCVI AABM Chinook fishery

The commercial TAC is calculated by deducting the Maa-nulth treaty allocation, the expected catch for FSC, the five Nations Multi-species Fishery share, and an expected recreational catch. The commercial TAC for this PST Chinook year is 47,058.

WCVI AABM Commercial Chinook Fishing Plan*Commercial Troll Fishing Plan*

Area G has conducted a CSAF demonstration fishery in all inside areas of WCVI, inside the surf line from April 1 to May 31 since 2023. This fishery previously harvested up to 3,000 Chinook to determine the stock composition of Chinook in the inside waters of the WCVI during this time period. In August 2025, the Maa-nulth Incremental Community-based Economic Fishery (ICEF) began implementation and took part in this springtime fishery in 2026.

New for 2026-2027: The increase up to a 4,000 piece total commercial allocation (including Maa-nulth ICEF) is permitted based on the results of the previous demonstration fisheries. Further details of this fishery can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

Conservation measures for Interior Fraser River Steelhead will continue in the form of a 27-day rolling window closure to the commercial troll fishery. See Table 13–5 for areas and dates. The following fishing plan is subject to change to account for domestic stocks of concern passing the WCVI. Fishery openings are planned to distribute harvests proportionately over all fishery periods subject to constraints to protect stocks of concern.

October 1 to March 15: Stock composition data indicate the majority of fish harvested during this period are U.S.-origin stocks rearing off the WCVI with the exception of LGS Chinook, which may also rear off the WCVI. Other Canadian Chinook stocks of concern are not vulnerable to the fishery during this period. Interior Fraser River Steelhead measures are in effect on the WCVI in parts of October. See [Appendix 7](#) for details.

During the period from October 1 to March 15, a precautionary harvest level will be set to reflect the preliminary nature of the TAC and the low catch per unit effort that typically occurs at this time of year.

March 16 to April 18: Stock composition data indicate the relative abundance of Fraser-bound Chinook in the fishery begins to increase in March and April. Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook is a stock of concern. Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook appear to migrate off the continental shelf seaward of the WCVI troll harvest area, rather than along the vicinity of the shoreline. However, a portion of the stock is vulnerable to the offshore troll fishery on their return migration.

A time-area closure will be maintained from March 16 to April 18 to avoid interception of Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook.

April 19 to June 15: Stock composition data indicate the relative abundance of Fraser and Columbia Chinook in the fishery increases during this period. Many of the Fraser- and Columbia-origin stocks vulnerable to the fishery during this period are relatively abundant. With the exception of LGS Chinook and Fraser River Spring 4₂ Chinook in SWVI through early May, other Canadian Chinook stocks of concern are not generally vulnerable to the fishery at this time. However, from mid- to late June, there is increasing potential for interception of stocks of concern including Fraser River Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook and Interior Fraser River Coho.

June 16 to late July: Through July, stock composition data indicate the relative abundance of Fraser- and U.S.-bound Chinook (Puget Sound, Columbia, Oregon stocks) in the fishery remains high during this period. Many of these stocks are relatively abundant. However, opportunities for harvest in July are limited due to increasing interception of Interior Fraser River Coho. As well, starting in 2007/2008, a time-area closure for the WCVI troll was implemented from June 16 to July 31 to provide protection for Fraser River Spring and Fraser River Summer 5₂ Chinook. In 2011 an impact assessment on Fraser River Spring and Fraser River Summer 5₂ Chinook was undertaken to determine if troll fisheries could be scheduled in the last week of July in WCVI areas. The assessment supported troll opportunities in Areas 125 to 127, commencing July 24.

Late July to early August: Through August, stock composition data indicate the relative abundance of Fraser- and U.S.-bound Chinook (Puget Sound, Columbia, Oregon) in the fishery remains high during this period.

Fraser River Spring and Fraser River Summer 5₂ Chinook are less vulnerable to the fishery at this time. However, opportunities for harvest in August may be limited due to increasing interception of Interior Fraser River Coho.

During this period, the fishery will be managed to minimize mortality on Interior Fraser River Coho through: i) a maximum interception of Coho and ii) the mandatory use of plugs. The fishery will be managed to minimize mortality of WCVI-origin Chinook through the use of closures during time and areas where WCVI Chinook stocks are prevalent.

To provide additional protection for Fraser River Chinook stocks the summer opening has been delayed until August 10.

September: Stock composition data indicate the majority of Chinook stocks vulnerable to the fishery during this period are bound for the Fraser River, Puget Sound, and the Columbia River. Vulnerable stocks of concern include Interior Fraser River Coho and WCVI Chinook, which are present until about mid-September. After mid-September, Interior Fraser River Coho are not vulnerable to the fishery and options for the retention of Coho bycatch during the Chinook fishery may be considered. The September fishing period permits the harvest of remaining WCVI AABM TAC, as the PST Chinook year ends on September 30.

Any harvest opportunities prior to mid-September may be managed to avoid interception of Interior Fraser River Coho and WCVI Chinook. Interior Fraser River Steelhead measures are in effect on the WCVI during parts of September. See Table 13–5 for details.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information for all commercial fisheries.

Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.

Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

There is an Area G troll partial validation program that occurs in conjunction with CWT sampling.

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

Maa-nulth Incremental Community-based Economic Fishery (ICEF)

As part of the Treaty and a side agreement, DFO and the Maa-nulth Nations are continuing to work towards fisheries access for sale, and in 2025, the Incremental Community-based Economic Fishing Plan (ICEFP) began implementation. This initiative represents an incremental step as DFO and Maa-nulth work toward longer-term arrangements under the fishery provisions negotiated through the Maa-nulth Treaty process.

Allocation

Access to the fishery comes from existing Area G licences for Chinook salmon held in abeyance for communal use by the Nations. As six (of the 55 total) Area G licences are held in abeyance, it represented a 11.3208% share of the total commercial access. The commercial Total Allowable Catch for WCVI AABM Chinook is determined after FSC, Treaty, right-based sale access and expected recreational catch has been deducted. The share of the commercial TAC for the Maa-nulth Incremental Community-based Economic Fishery is therefore 5,327 Chinook.

The Maa-nulth ICEFP for WCVI AABM Chinook is managed under the same priority, areas, and applicable conservation measures as the commercial Area G troll fishery for WCVI AABM Chinook (see above for further details). The fishery will proceed during the winter and spring months as well under the same priority, areas, and conservation measures as the commercial Area G troll.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a dockside fishery monitoring and mandatory catch reporting program in place, conducted by Maa-nulth fishery monitors, including harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information. There is also a biological sampling (including CWT) program in place for this fishery.

Harvest Agreements

There are no Harvest Agreements for AABM Chinook.

Economic Opportunities

There are no EO fisheries for AABM Chinook.

13.1.2.5.4 ESSR Fisheries

There are no ESSR fisheries for AABM Chinook.

13.1.3 WCVI ISBM CHINOOK

13.1.3.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

This section of the plan covers First Nations, recreational, and commercial fisheries for Chinook Salmon in all waters along the WCVI and terminal areas that are not defined as AABM fisheries under the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

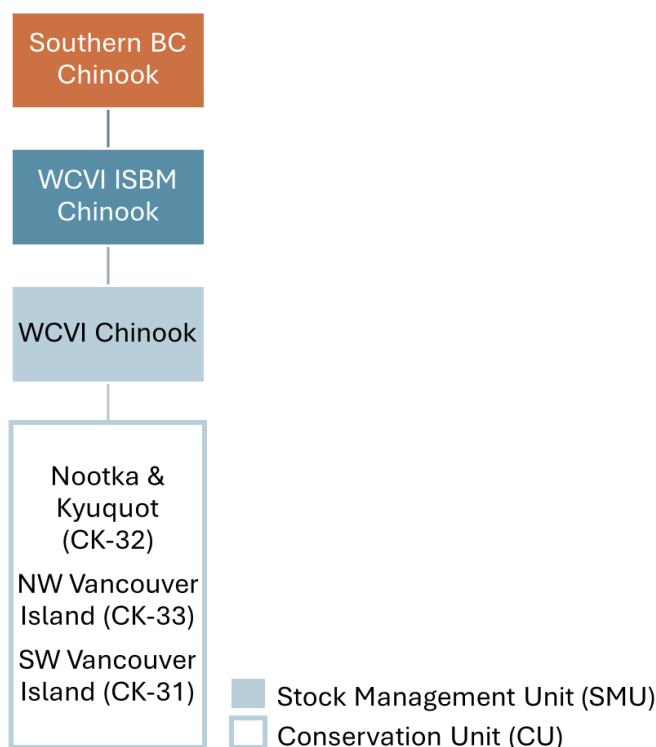


Figure 13–3: Overview of WCVI ISBM Chinook

13.1.3.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

The integrated biological status of WCVI Chinook CUs was assessed by CSAS as part of a review of Southern BC Chinook CUs. The integrated biological status of the Nootka and Kyuquot CU was assessed as RED, SW Vancouver Island CU was RED, and NW Vancouver Island CU was “to be determined” pending development of methods where enhanced sites are predominant.

The Science Advisory Report is available at:

http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2016/2016_042-eng.html

The WCVI Chinook Rebuilding Plan was approved by the Minister on March 11, 2025. The Rebuilding Plan was collaboratively developed with WCVI First Nations, and First Nations and

stakeholders were engaged on the plan Fall 2024 and Winter 2025. The WCVI Rebuilding Plan will be available on the DFO website Summer 2025.

13.1.3.2.1 Pre-season

The forecasted terminal return of adult Somass Chinook to Barkley Sound and Alberni Inlet in 2026 is 189,000 (range: 138,000 - 254,000). The Somass River's predicted adult age composition is 61%, 36%, and 3% for age-3, age-4, and age-5 fish, respectively. The above-average forecast for 2026 is driven primarily by the strong return of jacks (age-2) in 2025, which translates into a high predicted proportion of age-3 fish in 2026.

Conuma Hatchery: The predicted terminal return of Conuma Hatchery Chinook to Area 25 is 42,000 (range 29,000–58,000) with an age composition of 21%, 62% and 17% for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old fish, respectively.

Nitinat Hatchery: The predicted terminal return of Nitinat Hatchery Chinook to Area 22 is 18,000 (range 14,000–24,000) with an age composition of 36%, 54% and 10% for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old fish, respectively.

Other WCVI Stocks: The predicted terminal return of other WCVI index stocks is 29,000 (21,000–40,000) with an age composition of 27%, 63% and 10% for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old fish, respectively. This forecast return results largely from index stocks that are enhanced.

In most recent years, spawner abundances of wild indicator stocks within WCVI Conservation Units have been below provisional upper biological benchmarks, and in the case of the SWVI Conservation Unit, often below the lower biological benchmarks. Therefore, fisheries within Canada are managed to limit mortality on wild WCVI Chinook.

13.1.3.2.2 In-season

Where available, in-season abundance estimates will be reviewed in a timely manner to permit in-season consideration of additional terminal fishing opportunities for WCVI hatchery Chinook. A seine test fishery in Area 23 may occur to help assess in-season abundance for Robertson Creek hatchery Chinook.

13.1.3.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

In response to conservation concerns for Chinook in both countries, several changes were made to PST Chapter 3 (Chinook), including targeted harvest reductions in both Canadian and U.S.

fisheries and adoption of a new metric (the calendar year exploitation rate, CYER) to manage and evaluate performance in specific Canadian and U.S. individual stock-based management (ISBM) or “inside” fisheries. The agreement identifies reductions of up to 12.5% from 2009-2015 levels for specified Canadian and U.S. indicator populations in Canadian ISBM fisheries.

The Area 23 Harvest Committee is a forum that includes representatives from the Tseshaht, Hupacasath and Maa-nulth First Nations, the Nuuchah-nulth Tribal Council, the Area B and D Harvest Committees, the local Sport Fishing Advisory Committee, local municipal governments, the provincial government and DFO. The Area 23 Harvest Committee is developing a Somass Chinook local integrated fishery management plan that will define the escapement targets and harvest rates under various run sizes. The Decision Guidelines in this IFMP will be updated once the detailed local plan has been completed through the Area 23 Harvest Committee.

The Area 25 Harvest Committee is a forum that includes representatives from the Ehattesaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Nuchatlaht First Nations, the Area D Harvest Committee, the local Sport Fishing Advisory Committee, the Nootka Sound Watershed Society, local municipal governments and DFO. The Area 25 Roundtable is developing a detailed local management plan for Chinook in Area 25. Pre-season planning will particularly focus on developing assessment programs and harvest decision guidelines for Chinook fisheries (five Nations fishery, recreational and commercial) in Muchalat Inlet. The Decision Guidelines in the IFMP will be updated once the detailed local plan has been completed through the Area 25 Harvest Committee.

The Chinook mass-marking pilot program will continue in Area 25. The target this year is to again mark all Conuma River and Gold River Chinook.

ISBM Chinook fisheries will not be affected by the Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

A combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within southern BC waters and key foraging areas within the Swiftsure Bank area, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Gulf Islands, and near the mouth of the Fraser River. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.2.

Incidental Harvest, Bycatch and Constraints to WCVI ISBM Chinook Fisheries

Table 13–7: Actions to protect wild Chinook stocks

First Nations Fishery	Five Nations Multi-Species Fishery	Recreational Fishery	Commercial Fishery
Harvest documents and Communal licence harvest targets Conservation measures under discussion.	Harvest documents and communal licence harvest targets Potential time and area closures during the July to October period Conservation measures under discussion Measures will vary by area	Time and area closures, including: - Finfish closures - Salmon non-retention areas - Chinook non-retention areas - Maximum size limits - Mark-selective fisheries Daily, possession, and annual limits Measures will vary by area	Time and area closures during the July to October period

13.1.3.4 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS**13.1.3.4.1 First Nations Fisheries***Food, Social, and Ceremonial*

First Nations target Chinook stocks for FSC purposes throughout the WCVI.

Refer to Section 10.2 for Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts in Southern BC/Fraser River First Nations Fisheries. Note that AABM and ISBM Chinook amounts are combined.

Specific Conservation Measures for First Nations Fisheries

Protective measures may be considered in terminal areas, particularly Area 24, to reduce harvest impacts on wild Chinook. Potential measures will be the subject of discussion with First Nations communities prior to development of fishing plans.

Treaty Fisheries

Maa-nulth Fisheries (Domestic)

The Domestic allocations for Chinook Salmon under the Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement are as follows:

An amount of terminal Chinook Salmon equal to:

200 pieces, when the return of terminal Chinook Salmon is critical;

1,500 pieces, when the return of terminal Chinook Salmon is low;

2,000 pieces, when the return of terminal Chinook Salmon is moderate; and

2,600 pieces, when the return of terminal Chinook Salmon is abundant.

The Maa-nulth First Nations provide electronic catch reports to the Department. The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing dates, location of harvest, species harvested, harvest effort, and catch (in pieces).

Five Nations (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht / Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations) Multi-species Fishery

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island – Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined fishing territories and to sell that fish. The fishery monitoring and catch reporting requirements for the five Nations Multi-species Fishery include 100 per cent independent dockside monitoring to validate catch, as well as fisher-completed logbooks. Catch data is provided to the Department on a weekly basis. Additional details can be found in the approved Five Nations [Multi species Fishery Management Plan](#).

New for 2026-27: The Department is working with the five Nations and the Area 25 roundtable to explore the potential of an in-river right-based sale fishery targeting hatchery enhanced Gold River Chinook.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. If a commercial vessel is used for fishing under a communal licence, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by the vessel to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours of the landing of fish harvested from that vessel. Catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing

Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

13.1.3.4.2 Recreational Fisheries

ISBM recreational Chinook fisheries in the WCVI take place annually in Areas 21 to 24 from August 1 to October 15, and in Areas 25 to 27 from July 1 to October 15. Chinook caught in these areas outside of this time period are accounted for as part of the AABM fishery catch. Catch and effort typically peaks in these areas during the months of July and August, and effort is largely abundance-driven.

The recreational total annual limit for Chinook from any tidal waters was set at 10 Chinook in April 2019 as part of conservation measures to address the poor status of many Chinook stocks in BC. Recreational anglers must record all Chinook retained either on their licence, or if mobile internet access is immediately available, the licence holder may alternatively record catch immediately in their National Recreational Licensing System (NRLS) account. The minimum size limit for Chinook in recreational ISBM fisheries is 45 cm. The maximum daily limit for Chinook is two, and the possession limit is four. Updates to recreational fisheries are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website at:

<http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>

New for 2026-27: The Department is working with the Area 25 roundtable to explore the potential of an in-river recreational fishery targeting hatchery enhanced Gold River Chinook.

Recreational Fisheries Specific Conservation Measures

Conservation measures for ISBM fisheries are designed largely to protect wild Chinook returning to the WCVI. Decisions on these management measures are primarily made pre-season and go into effect based on stock outlook and expected returns. In-season management decisions can also be made in response to localized Chinook escapements. Harvests largely target hatchery production and management measures are designed to minimize impact on wild WCVI Chinook populations.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs, including seasonal creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program, are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

An enhanced independent recreational monitoring program (i.e., reference fishery) will continue in Area 25. This reference fishery will be used to independently verify at-sea releases,

mark rates and stock composition. Data from the reference fishery program, along with historic data, will be used to evaluate the potential of MSF opportunities in Area 25 for future years.

13.1.3.4.3 Commercial Fisheries

Allocation

Table 13–8: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South-WCVI Inside	21 to 27	5.0% ^h	75.0% ⁱ	5.0% ⁱ	15.0% ^j	0.0%

Notes on Chinook allocations (south):

^hArea 23 sharing arrangement currently 33.3% seine: 66.7% gill net.

ⁱArea 25 fishery (potential for future review. 75% fishery to Area D (e.g., Tlupana Inlet fishery); potential 5% to Area E if future surplus at Nitinat; otherwise default to Area D)

^jwinter troll fishery

WCVI ISBM Commercial Chinook Fisheries

Commercial fisheries for WCVI ISBM Chinook do not occur in areas that will be impacted by the Interior Fraser River Steelhead management measures.

Area D Gill Net Potential Fisheries

Mid-August to Mid/Late-September – Area 23: Terminal fisheries on Robertson Creek Hatchery Chinook are expected.

Mid-August – Area 25: Terminal fisheries on Conuma hatchery Chinook are expected. Typically, Area D and the five Nations have agreed to a swap of allocation in which Area D will swap their entire Gold/Burman Chinook allocation for a corresponding quantity of the five Nation's Conuma Chinook allocation, pre-determining a Conuma Chinook targeted fishery for Area D will occur in Tlupana Inlet only.

New for 2026-27: Area D has the option to fish the Conuma Chinook fishery in Tlupana Inlet as a derby style fishery or as an Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) demonstration fishery in 2026. Area D must choose which style of fishery to proceed with for 2026 and inform the Department of its decision no later than June 15, 2026.

New for 2026-27: In preparation for the possibility of a limited fleet Conuma Chinook derby fishery, Area D will hold a random draw to select eligible fishers. Details on the selection process will be published via Fishery Notice.

The net length maximum for all Area D Chinook directed fisheries in Areas 23 and 25 is 183 m.

Area B Seine Potential Fisheries

Mid-August to Early September – Area 23: Terminal fisheries on Robertson Creek hatchery Chinook are expected.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting requirements for catch information for all commercial fisheries:

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

Any potential Area B fishery in Area 23 would be conducted as a pooled fishery with a 100% dockside monitoring program.

*WCVI ISBM Chinook First Nations Economic Opportunity and Treaty Sale Fisheries**Economic Opportunities*

Economic opportunities for Somass First Nations (Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations) are expected. Economic opportunity fisheries will be conducted under agreements that specify provisions for planning fisheries, allocations, catch reporting requirements as well as roles and responsibilities regarding the management of the fishery. The TAC for economic opportunity fisheries is 50% of the commercial TAC, which includes ISBM Chinook Salmon allocated for the FSC fishery. The Department’s general approach is that Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities are managed using the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery. Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities may be implemented with different times, areas, gears and regulations consistent with the overall management approach for the commercial fishery.

Economic opportunity fisheries for WCVI ISBM Chinook do not occur in areas that will be impacted by the Interior Fraser River Steelhead management measures.

Treaty Communal Sale

Under the Maa-nulth First Nations treaty, the Huu-ay-aht First Nations – Canada Enhanced Sarita Chinook Terminal Harvest Arrangement, is a side agreement which provides the Huu-

ay-aht First Nations with a communal sale fishery. This terminal, mark-selective Chinook Salmon fishery occurs between late August through September in the Sarita River.

13.1.3.4.4 ESSR Fisheries

There is the potential for ESSR fisheries at the Robertson, Nitinat, and Thornton hatcheries as well as Burman River when broodstock collection targets will be met. These fisheries are implemented in collaboration with local First Nations and DFO hatchery staff. ESSR fisheries for other enhanced streams may be considered where excess escapements can be identified in-season. There is the potential for a Surplus to Escapement fishery on Conuma Chinook for the five Nations under the Five Nations Multi-Species Fishery Management Plan.

New for 2026-27: There is the potential for an ESSR fishery in the Tahsish River (Area 26) where a surplus of marked stray Conuma River Chinook has been identified. These fisheries will be explored in collaboration with local First Nations and DFO staff.

13.1.4 OKANAGAN CHINOOK

13.1.4.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

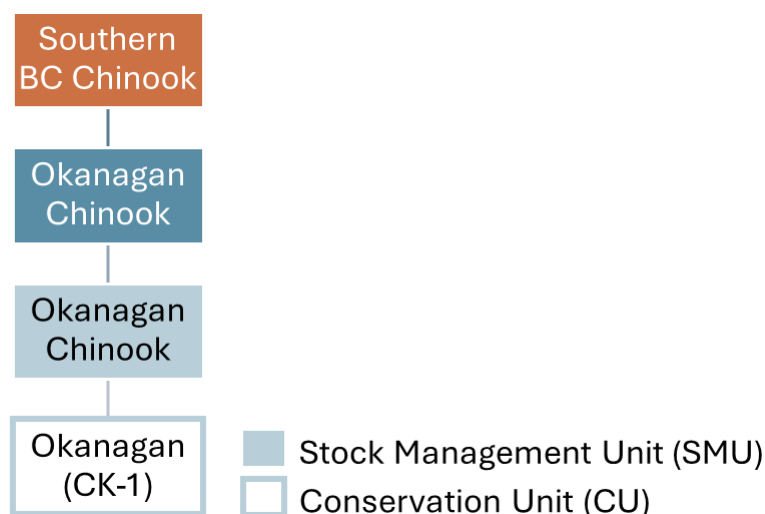


Figure 13–4: Overview of Okanagan Chinook

The Okanagan Chinook population is the last remaining Columbia basin stock that resides within Canada and it is geographically and genetically distinct from Chinook populations elsewhere in Canada. The Canadian Okanagan population consists of anadromous salmon that migrate to and from the Pacific Ocean through the Columbia River to Canadian portions of the Okanagan River. The average annual number of Chinook spawning in Canada is less than 50 adults.

The Canadian portion of the Okanagan Chinook population likely has a life history similar to that of other Upper Columbia River summer stocks.

The Rebuilding Plan for Okanagan Chinook is complete and is now posted online.

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/ifmp-gmp/salmon-saumon/2024/okanagan-2024-eng.html>

13.1.4.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

The Okanagan Chinook stock was reassessed in April 2017 as *Endangered* rather than *Threatened*, as previously assessed by COSEWIC.

The WSP biological status of Okanagan Chinook was assessed as in the red zone by CSAS in 2016. The Science Advisory Report is available at:

http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2016/mpo-dfo/Fs70-6-2016-042-eng.pdf

13.1.4.2.1 Pre-season

Expectations are for continued depressed abundance related to very low parental escapements, low marine and freshwater survival, and low productivity. Okanagan Chinook are part of the Columbia River Summer Chinook aggregate of which the United States produces a formal forecast.

13.1.4.2.2 In-season

An electronic counter at Zosel Dam at the outlet of Osoyoos Lake can provide a preliminary indication of adult Chinook returns. A high degree of uncertainty exists with this count, as an unknown number of fish are likely to drop back downstream and spawn in the United States portions of the Okanagan River and/or the Similkameen River. Spawning ground assessments are done on an annual basis by the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) fisheries staff and are comprised of visual/dead recovery surveys to determine spawner abundance in the Okanagan River and Skaha Lake system. In addition to the visual surveys, ONA is developing a PIT tag mark-recapture method to provide a more accurate assessment of spawner abundance.

Decision Guidelines and Management Actions

This stock likely has the same life history pattern as other Upper Columbia summer Chinook populations and could be intercepted in fisheries targeting these stocks. In the terminal area in Canada (Osoyoos Lake), this stock may be intercepted in FSC, commercial, and recreational Sockeye-directed fisheries. There are no Canadian directed fisheries on this stock.

13.1.4.2.3 Incidental Harvest, Bycatch and Constraints to Fisheries

Non-retention measures are in effect in Canadian fisheries.

13.1.4.3 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

There are no directed fisheries on this stock.

13.1.5 SOUTHERN ISBM CHINOOK

13.1.5.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

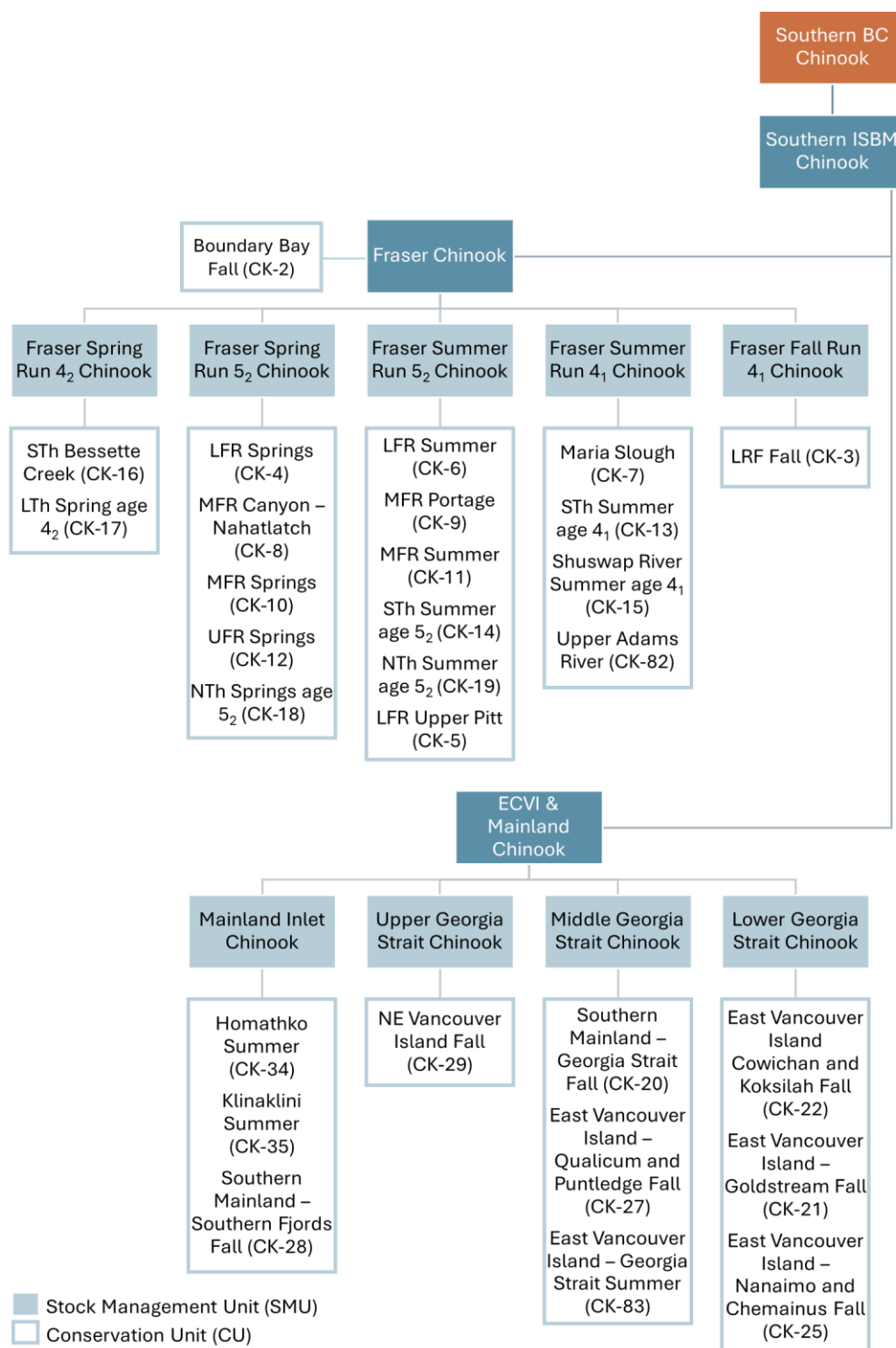


Figure 13–5: Overview of Southern ISBM Chinook

ISBM management regimes apply to all Chinook Salmon fisheries subject to the Pacific Salmon Treaty that are not AABM fisheries. These include marine and freshwater salmon fisheries from northern British Columbia to the northern Oregon coast. ISBM fisheries in Southern B.C. include First Nations, recreational, and commercial net fisheries (e.g., Fraser River gill net).

Fraser Chinook

For management purposes, Fraser Chinook stocks will be managed using the Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, Summer 5₂, Summer 4₁, and Fraser Fall 4₁ management units (MUs) employed under the PST process to align fisheries management objectives with indicator stocks, escapement, catch, and exploitation rate data used in the PST process. Information for these MUs is found in Table 13–9 Table 13–8 including current management objectives, recent fishery mortality indices (FMIs), indicator stocks representing the MU, and any management goals currently in place. The relationship between current PST management units, COSEWIC designatable units (DUs), Wild Salmon Policy conservation units (CUs) and spawning locations is shown in Table 13–9. See section 13.1 for more detailed information on the management objectives. The Summer 4₁ MU does not currently have a management objective, but the Lower Shuswap indicator stock for this MU does have a management objective identified in the PST.

Table 13–9: Management values for all Fraser River Chinook Management Units

	Spring 4 ₂	Spring 5 ₂	Summer 5 ₂	Summer 4 ₁	Fall 4 ₁
2026 Management Objective	Allow as many fish to pass through to the spawning grounds as possible	Allow as many fish to pass through to the spawning grounds as possible	Allow as many fish to pass through to the spawning grounds as possible	In Development	Harrison Chinook escapement to exceed 75,100 or CYER below ~11.0%*
2019-2024 Average FMI or CYER	3.6%	4.4%	12.2%	22.5%	Harrison prelim. 3-year avg. (2022-2024) CYER = ~15%
Indicator Stock	Nicola	n/a	n/a	Lower Shuswap	Harrison

	Spring 4 ₂	Spring 5 ₂	Summer 5 ₂	Summer 4 ₁	Fall 4 ₁
Indicator Stock Escapement Goal	n/a	n/a	n/a	12,300	75,100
PST ER% Obligation	16.7%	n/a	n/a	20%	10.9%

*Canada is required to apply the limit when the three-year running average CYER exceeds the limit by more than 10%. The average includes years in which the escapement goal is not achieved and years in which the escapement goal is achieved with a CYER that is less than or equal to the ISBM obligation.

A technical review of the FMI (which combines Fraser run reconstruction plus marine catch/stock composition data) by the JTC indicated that since management measures were introduced in 2019, fishery mortalities for earlier-timed Fraser Spring 4₂ and Spring 5₂ Chinook were reduced to below 5% on average for the 2019-2024 period. Over that timeframe, the average FMI of 12.2% (2014-18 average of 25%) for Summer 5₂ Chinook salmon did not decline to the same extent due to its later migration timing that overlaps with the more abundant Summer 4₁ Chinook salmon that was the primary target of Chinook salmon fisheries. In 2023 through 2025, the FSMB recommended that a precautionary management approach continue to be in place for Spring 4₂ and Spring 5₂ Chinook salmon to reduce the estimated total FMI from approximately 15% towards 10%, in a manner that respects priority access for First Nations food, social and ceremonial fisheries after conservation measures.

The Department will maintain management measures implemented in 2023 through 2025 with minor changes. These approved measures for Fraser River Summer 5₂ Chinook were to limit Canadian fishing mortality to 14%

In 2026 changes to the Management measures from last year include:

- Implementing new recreational fishery gear restrictions (a prohibition on the use of treble hooks and requirement that hooks be barbless and a maximum size restriction) to improve the survival of Chinook salmon released in the recreational fishery;
- Reducing the maximum retention size for Chinook salmon from 80 cm to 75 cm for recreational fisheries in southwestern Vancouver Island marine waters (Juan De Fuca Management Areas 19-1, 19-3, 19-4, and 20-3 to 20-7) during the month of August;
- Allowing Incremental access for First Nations FSC fishing opportunities in the Fraser River;

- Implementing a start date of August 10 (6 days earlier than previous years) for commercial troll fisheries in Northern and Southern British Columbia;

Additional fishery management measures may be implemented in-season in response to specific environmental conditions in-season. Additional First Nation FSC fishery opportunities may be authorized in terminal areas of the Fraser River watershed where abundance permits.

Fraser Spring 4₂ Chinook

Spring 4₂ Chinook return to spawn from early March through late July, with migration peaking in June in the lower Fraser River. These populations primarily mature as adults at age 4 (90%), with lower numbers maturing at age 5 (7%) and occasionally at age 3 (3%).

Coded-wire tagged (CWT) Nicola River Chinook released from the Spius Creek Hatchery is the PST exploitation rate indicator stock used to assess survival and exploitation rates of Spring 4₂ Chinook in Canadian and U.S. fisheries. Based on CWT recoveries from fisheries, Fraser Spring 4₂ Chinook have historically been encountered in Fraser River First Nations gill net fisheries, Fraser River and tributary recreational fisheries, marine troll fisheries (e.g., WCVI and North Coast), and recreational fisheries in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Strait of Georgia, with lower rates in other marine recreational fisheries.

There are no in-season abundance forecasts developed for this SMU.

Fraser Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook

Spring 5₂ Chinook return to the Fraser River to spawn from early March through late July and migration peaks in late June in the lower Fraser River. Summer 5₂ Chinook have later timing and return to the Fraser River to spawn from late June to August with a peak in late July. These populations primarily mature as adults at age 5 (approx. 70%) and age 4 (approx. 20%) with lower numbers at age 3 and age 6.

There is historical information from past CWT recoveries (e.g., Dome Creek, a discontinued Spring 5₂ indicator) for these populations that indicates Spring 5₂ Chinook have been encountered in many of the same areas as Spring 4₂ Chinook. Summer 5₂ Chinook are also encountered in the same areas, but relative impacts among fisheries may differ given the approximately one month later migration timing of these Summer 5₂ stocks. A PST indicator stock for Summer 5₂ Chinook is currently under development at Chilko River, but data from this indicator are not expected to be useable for management purposes for several years.

There is an in-season estimate of the terminal abundance for the combined Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ SMUs based on catch per unit of effort (CPUE) in the Albion test fishery and historical terminal abundance in the lower Fraser River. Details of the modelling approach can

be found in a CSAS document published here: http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/ResDocs-DocRech/2012/2012_150-eng.html

Fraser Summer 4₁ Chinook

The Summer 4₁ Chinook SMU consists of several populations that spawn almost exclusively within the Thompson River watershed and migrate through the lower Fraser River from mid-July to mid-September.

Within this stock group, CWTs from the Lower Shuswap River indicator stock are used to monitor survival and exploitation. Other systems of the aggregate are assessed visually, and work is underway to calibrate their escapement estimates.

There are no in-season abundance forecasts developed for this SMU.

Fraser Fall 4₁ Chinook

Fall 4₁ Chinook spawn mostly in the Harrison and Chilliwack watersheds and return to the Lower Fraser between mid-August and mid-November, with the majority of the run migrating through this area from mid-September to mid-October.

ECVI and Mainland Inlets

Chinook populations in the upper part of the Strait of Georgia include both ocean- and stream-type Chinook that spawn in systems from Northeast Vancouver Island down to Campbell River and across to the Mainland Inlets.

Within this stock group, CWTs from the Quinsam River indicator stock are used to monitor survival and exploitation rates. In the Mainland Inlets area, Phillips River was monitored as an exploitation rate indicator stock, but has been transitioned to an escapement indicator after hatchery releases were halted in 2019. Only a few other systems are monitored consistently for escapement in this area, including the Nimpkish River. There are no pre-season or in-season abundance forecasts developed for this unit.

Chinook populations in the lower Strait of Georgia are dominated by ocean-type life history (upper Nanaimo Chinook have a stream-type component) and fall run timing (summer runs exist in Puntledge and Nanaimo although some fish enter earlier in the year). A summer run may exist in Cowichan as well but the current status is unknown. Mean generational time is 3 or 4 years. Most populations are enhanced to some level. There are major DFO facilities on the Puntledge, Big Qualicum, Little Qualicum, Tenderfoot and Capilano Rivers. Smaller facilities enhance stocks in the Sliammon, Lang, Chapman, Seymour, Little Campbell, Oyster, Tsolum, Englishman, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Cowichan and Goldstream systems. Most of these systems are monitored for spawner abundance.

Coded-wire tag indicators include Cowichan and Big Qualicum (Fall run timing). Pre-season forecasts are not produced for these systems. Some are monitored in-season and reported weekly in a bulletin.

13.1.5.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

In November 2018, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) released the results for an assessment of 16 southern B.C. Chinook designatable units (DUs). Of these units, 13 DUs originate in the Fraser River with 7 DUs assessed as *Endangered*, 4 *Threatened* and 1 *Special Concern*; South Thompson Ocean Summer Chinook were deemed *Not at Risk*. For the other 3 DUs outside the Fraser River, 1 DU (East Vancouver Island Stream Spring; Nanaimo River) was assessed as *Endangered* and 2 Southern Mainland DUs were *Data Deficient*.

In 2025 a Science Advisory Report summarizing the Recovery Potential Assessment (RPA) for East Vancouver Island Summer Chinook (Designatable Units 19 and 20) was released (<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/41312223.pdf>). This includes both Nanaimo and Puntledge River Summer stocks. In 2023, a PSSSI-funded integrated rebuilding planning process was initiated for Nanaimo River Summer Chinook, supporting coordinated technical engagement, updated status assessment work, and development of rebuilding actions aligned with emerging Science advice. The rebuilding plan process and document development is currently ongoing.

A proposal to amalgamate the Nanaimo Spring and Summer runs into one CU (CK-83) has been approved and the Science response can be found here: <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/41098304.pdf>. Status information is summarized in Table 13–9 and at <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/cosewic-assessments-status-reports/chinook-salmon-2018.html>. COSEWIC submitted these assessments to the Government of Canada via the annual report in fall 2019 (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/cosewic-annual-reports/2018-2019.html#toc1>). This initiated the formal process to consider whether or not these DUs would be listed under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). COSEWIC assessment of the remaining southern B.C. Chinook populations occurred in November 2020 and were submitted to the Government of Canada via the annual report in fall 2021 (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/cosewic-annual-reports/2020-2021.html#toc1>). Of these populations, 3 DUs originate in the Fraser River and all were designated as *Endangered*. Of the other 9 DUs outside the Fraser River, 1 DU (East Vancouver Island, Ocean, Summer) was designated *Endangered*, 3 DUs were designated as *Threatened*, 1 DU was designated as *Special Concern*, 1 DU was designated *Not at*

Risk, and 3 DUs were *Data Deficient*. Status information is summarized in Table 13–10 and at [Detailed version November 2020 \(cosewic.ca\)](#).

Table 13–10 Relationship between current Pacific Salmon Treaty fishery management units, COSEWIC designatable units (DUs), Wild Salmon Policy (WSP) conservation units (CUs) and spawning locations. Colour coding for the CU and WSP Status column is as follows: no colour = TBD, gray = Data Deficient, green = healthy, amber = marginal, orange = poor to marginal, red = poor

Fishery Management Unit	Designatable Unit	COSEWIC Assessment	CU and WSP Status	Spawning Locations
Spring 4₂ Chinook	DU14 BC South Thompson Stream Summer	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-16 STh Bessette Creek	Bessette Creek, Creighton Creek; Duteau Creek; Harris Creek
	DU15 BC Lower Thompson Stream Spring	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-17 Lower Thompson Spring	Bonaparte River; Coldwater River; Deadman River; Louis Creek; Nicola River; Spius Creek
Spring 5₂ Chinook	DU3 BC Lower Fraser River Stream Spring	<i>Special Concern</i>	CK-04 LFR Spring	Birkenhead
	DU4 BC Lower Fraser River Stream Summer (Upper Pitt)	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-05 LFR Upper Pitt	Pitt River-Upper
	DU7 BC Middle Fraser River Stream Spring	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-08 FR Canyon-Nahatlatch	Anderson, Nahatlatch
	DU9 BC Middle Fraser River Stream Spring	<i>Threatened</i>	CK-10 MFR Spring	Bridge River; Cariboo River-upper; Chilako River; Chilcotin River upper; Chilcotin River-lower; Cottonwood River; Endako River; Horsefly River; Narcosli Creek; Naver Creek; West Road River and others

Fishery Management Unit	Designatable Unit	COSEWIC Assessment	CU and WSP Status	Spawning Locations
	DU11 BC Upper Fraser River Stream Spring	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-12 UFR Spring	Bowron River; Dome Creek; East Twin Creek; Fraser River-above Tete Jaune; Forgetmenot Creek; Goat River; Holliday Creek; Holmes River; Horsey Creek; Humbug Creek; Kenneth Creek; McGregor River; McKale River; Morkill River; Nevin Creek; Ptarmigan Creek; Slim Creek; Small Creek; Snowshoe Creek; Swift Creek; Torpy River; Walker Creek; Wansa Creek; West Twin Creek; Willow River; and others
	DU16 BC North Thompson Stream Spring	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-18 NTHOM Spring	Albreda River; Blue River; Finn Creek; Lyon Creek; Mad River
Summer 5₂ Chinook	DU5 BC Lower Fraser River Stream Summer	<i>Threatened</i>	CK-06 LFR Summer	Big Silver Creek; Chilliwack/Vedder River; Cogburn Creek; Douglas Creek; Green River; Lillooet River; Sloquet Creek; Tipella Cr.
	DU8 BC Middle Fraser River Stream Fall	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-09 MFR Portage	Portage
	DU10 BC Middle Fraser River Stream Summer	<i>Threatened</i>	CK-11 MFR Summer	Cariboo River-lower; Chilko River; Kazchek Creek; Kuzkwa River; Nechako River; Quesnel River; Seton River; Stellako River; Stuart River; and others
	DU13 BC South Thompson Stream Summer	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-14 STh Summer age 5 ₂	Eagle River; Salmon River

Fishery Management Unit	Designatable Unit	COSEWIC Assessment	CU and WSP Status	Spawning Locations
	DU17 BC North Thompson Stream Summer	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-19 NTHOM Summer	Barriere River; Clearwater River; Lemieux Creek; Mahood River; Mann Creek; North Thompson River; Raft River
Summer 4₁ Chinook	DU6 BC Lower Fraser River Ocean Summer	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-07 Maria Slough Summer	Maria Slough
	DU12 BC South Thompson Ocean Summer	<i>Not At Risk</i>	CK-13 STh Summer age 4 ₁ CK-15 Shuswap River Summer	Adams River; Little River; South Thompson River; Lower Thompson River; Lower Shuswap, Middle Shuswap
Fraser Fall 4₁ Chinook	DU2 BC Lower Fraser River Ocean Fall	<i>Threatened</i>	CK-03 LFR Fall	Harrison
ECVI and Mainland Chinook	DU19 BC East Vancouver Island Stream Spring; DU20 BC East Vancouver Island Ocean Summer	<i>Endangered</i>	CK-83 Vancouver Island – Georgia Strait Summer	Puntledge River; Chemainus River; Nanaimo River; Cowichan River
	DU21 BC East Vancouver Island Ocean Fall	<i>Special Concern</i>	CK-21 East Vancouver Island – Goldstream Fall	Goldstream River; Tod Creek;

Fishery Management Unit	Designatable Unit	COSEWIC Assessment	CU and WSP Status	Spawning Locations
			CK-22 East Vancouver Island – Cowichan & Koksilah Fall	Cowichan River; Koksilah River; Mesachie Creek; Patricia Creek; Robertson River; Shaw Creek
			CK-25 East Vancouver Island – Nanaimo & Chemanius Fall	Nanaimo River; Chemainus River; Haslam Creek; Napoleon Creek
			CK-27 East Vancouver Island – Qualicum & Puntledge Fall	Englishman River; Qualicum River; Black Creek; Little Qualicum River; Morrison Creek; Nanoose Creek; Nile Creek; Oyster River, Puntledge River; Rosewall Creek, Simms Creek; Tstable River; Tsolum River; Willow Creek; Woods Creek
	DU23 BC East Vancouver Island Ocean Fall (EVI+SFj)	<i>Not At Risk</i>	CK-29 East Vancouver Island – North Fall	Campbell River; Nimpkish River; Quinsam River; Salmon River; Adam River; Amor De Cosmos Creek; Cluxewe River; Drew Creek; Eve River; Granite Bay Creek; Keogh River; Kokish River; Mckercher Creek; Menzies Creek; Mohun Creek; Nahwitti River; Quatse River; Tsitika River; White River
West Vancouver Island Chinook	DU24 BC West Vancouver Island Ocean Fall (South)	<i>Threatened</i>	CK-31 West Vancouver Island – South Fall	Bedwell System; Kennedy River Upper; Megin River; Mayeha River; Nahmint River; Nitinat River; San Juan River; Sarita River; Somass River; Toquart River;

Fishery Management Unit	Designatable Unit	COSEWIC Assessment	CU and WSP Status	Spawning Locations
				Tranquil Creek; Atleo River; Ayum Creek; Bedwell River; Campus Creek; Canoe Pass Creek; Carnation Creek, Cataract Creek, Caycuse River; Charters River; China Creek; Upper and Lower Clayoquot River; Clemens Creek; Colemans Creek Consinka Creek; Cous Creek; Cypre River; De Mamiel Creek; Deer Creek; Doobah Creek; Drinkwater Creek; Effingham River; Franklin River; Gordon River; Harrison Creek; Henderson Lake Creek; Ice River; Itatsoo Creek; Kennedy Lake Feeder Streams; Kennedy River Lower; Klanawa River; Lens Creek; Little Toquart Creek; Lucky Creek; Macktush Creek, Maggie River; Mercantile Creek; Muriel Lake; Pipesteam Creek; Renfrew Creek; Rocky Creek; Sand River; Smith Creek; Snug Basin Creek; Somass Sproat GC System; Sooke River; Sugsaw Creek; Sutton Mill Creek; Sydney River; Thorton Creek; Tofino Creek; Twin Rivers West Creek ; Uchuck Creek; Ursus Creek; Wallace Creek; Warn Bay Creek; Watta Creek;
	DU25 BC West Vancouver Island Ocean Fall (Nootka & Kyuquot)	<i>Threatened</i>	CK-32 West Vancouver Island – Nootka & Kyuquot Fall	Artlish River; Burman River; Caton Creek; Conuma River; Gold River; Kaouk River; Leiner River; Sucwoa River; Tahsis River; Tahish River; Tlupana River; Tsowwin River; Zeballos River; Amai Creek; Battle Bay River;

Fishery Management Unit	Designatable Unit	COSEWIC Assessment	CU and WSP Status	Spawning Locations
				Brodick Creek; Cachalot Creek; Chamiss Creek; Chum Creek; Clanninick Creek; Cougar Creek; Deserted Creek; Easy Creek; Elaine Creek; Eliza Creek; Espinosa Creek; Hammond Creek; Hoiss Creek; Houston River; Jacklah River; Jansen Lake Creek; Kapoose Creek; Kashuti River; Kauwinch River; Kendrick Creek; Kleeptee Creek; Little Zeballos River; Malkscope River; Mamat Creek; Marvinas Bay Creek; Mccurdy Creek; Mckay Cove Creek 1; Mooyah River; Muchalat River; Narrowgut Creek; Nasparti River; Oktwanch River; Ououkinsh River; Owossitsa Creek; Park River; Porritt Creek; Power River; Ransom River; Silverado Creek; Tatchu Creek
	DU1 BC Southern Maninland Boundary Bay, Ocean, Fall	<i>Threatened</i>	CK-02 Boundary Bay Fall	Lower Campbell River; Nicomekl River; Serpentine River

The integrated biological status of Southern B.C. Chinook CUs has been assessed by CSAS. The Science Advisory Report is available at:

http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2016/2016_042-eng.html

Status evaluations were completed and an integrated biological status designation identified for 15 of the 35 CUs; of these 15 designations, 11 were assigned a Red status, 1 was assigned a Red/Amber status, 1 was assigned an Amber status, and 2 were assigned a Green status. For another 9 of the 35 CUs, an integrated status evaluation was not possible based on the information presented at the workshop; for these CUs, the status designation is “data deficient” and this designation is not expected to change until more information becomes available. For

the remaining 11 of the 35 CUs, status evaluations were not completed. Instead, the status of these CUs was classified as “to be determined”. These CUs are a component of units where the enhanced sites are predominant; consensus was not reached on how to derive a WSP status assessment for such units.

13.1.5.2.1 Pre-season

See [Appendix 8](#) for the full 2026 Salmon Outlook.

Table 13–11 Stock outlook anticipated in ISBM Chinook fisheries

Stock Management Unit	Final Stock Outlook for 2026
Fraser River Spring 4 ₂ Chinook	The Outlook is well below average (1).
Fraser River Spring and Summer 5 ₂ Chinook	The Outlook is well below average (1).
Fraser River Summer 4 ₁ Chinook	The Outlook is abundant (4), except for Maria Slough which is anticipated to return well below average (1).
Fraser Lates (Harrison)	The Outlook is near average (3).
Lower Strait of Georgia Chinook	The Outlook is abundant (4).
Middle Strait of Georgia Chinook	The Outlook is abundant for fall run stocks (4) and below to well below average for summer run populations (1-2).
Upper Strait of Georgia Chinook	The Outlook is near average (3).
Mainland Inlet Chinook	The Outlook is unknown as the data are deficient.

Fraser Chinook Pre-season Forecast

The forecast estimates for each Fraser Chinook SMU are outlined in Table 13–12. The forecasts represent the estimated terminal return to the mouth of the Fraser River for each SMU except the forecasts for Summer 4₁ and Harrison (Fall 4₁) Chinook, which represent the estimated spawner abundance (i.e., returns to the spawning grounds after all ocean and freshwater fisheries harvest and mortalities).

Table 13–12 Forecast estimates for Fraser Chinook SMUs

Stock Management Unit	2026 Forecast Abundance
Spring 4 ₂	6,732 (Terminal Return)
Spring 5 ₂	30,301 (Terminal Return)
Summer 5 ₂	22,841 (Terminal Return)
Summer 4 ₁	260,669 (Escapement)
Fall 4 ₁ (Harrison age 3, 4, 5)	63,058 (Escapement)

13.1.5.2.2 In-season

Fraser River Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook

An estimate of terminal abundance for these management units is determined in-season from the relationship between the cumulative catch per unit effort (CPUE) of Chinook caught in the Albion test fishery from early May to mid-June and historical terminal returns to the mouth of the Fraser River.

Updates of the predicted terminal return of Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook, for informational purposes, are generally released in mid-May and early June, with a final in-season update in the third week of June. Updates of the predicted return will not be used in-season to adjust management measures given conservation concerns for Fraser River Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook.

13.1.5.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

All ISBM Fisheries

In response to conservation concerns for Chinook in both countries, several changes were made to Chapter 3 (Chinook) of the PST, including targeted harvest reductions in both Canadian and U.S. fisheries and adoption of a new metric (the calendar year exploitation rate or CYER) to manage and evaluate performance in specific Canadian and U.S. individual stock-based management (ISBM) or “inside” fisheries. The agreement identifies reductions of up to 12.5% from 2009 to 2015 average levels for specified Canadian and U.S. indicator populations in Canadian ISBM fisheries.

Continuing this season, all Fraser fisheries will be subject to specific end dates first introduced in 2022. There will be no fishing for salmon in the Fraser mainstem after November 30.

Similarly, in tributaries where recreational Chinook and Coho directed opportunities exist, there will be no fishing for Chum Salmon from December 1 to 31. FSC opportunities will continue to be provided in tributaries until December 31 for those First Nations with access to terminal areas. More information on fishery end dates are provided in the Chum Section 13.2.

Fraser Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂ Chinook

Reflecting feedback received in recent years during IFMP consultation and engagement, the Department will maintain fisheries management actions to protect Fraser Summer 5₂ Chinook with the following changes:

See Section 6.4. and Section 13.1.5.1 for more details.

Fraser Chinook management units include several at-risk stocks (i.e., 7 *Endangered*, 3 *Threatened*, and 1 *Special Concern*). These populations have been affected by very poor productivity, which has resulted in steep declines in spawner abundances. A suite of highly-precautionary fishery restrictions are intended to provide a high degree of protection to at-risk Fraser Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂ Chinook returning in 2026. See management objectives for Fraser Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂ Chinook in Section 6.4.

Fraser Summer 4₁ Chinook

Within the Summer 4₁ SMU, South Thompson Chinook were assessed by COSEWIC as *Not At Risk* and Lower Fraser Summer Ocean Chinook (Maria Slough) were identified as *Endangered*. The migration of Summer 4₁ Chinook overlaps with other Fraser Chinook stocks of conservation concern, particularly Summer 5₂ Chinook.

Additional reductions in commercial and recreational fishery harvest opportunities implemented in recent years will continue and are intended to support priority access for First Nations FSC fisheries in the Fraser River given expectations for restricted FSC Chinook fishery opportunities early in the season. See Section 13.1 for specific management measures for each sector.

The Department has set an escapement objective of 12,300 for the Lower Shuswap River. This value corresponds to the spawning escapement that would produce the maximum sustained yield (S_{MSY}). The estimate of spawning escapement in 2025 was approximately 30,000.

Directed fishing opportunities may occur on this stock group, provided that fisheries can be designed to limit impacts on potentially co-migrating stocks of concern, including: Spring 4₂

Chinook, Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook, Harrison Chinook, Fraser River Sockeye, Interior Fraser River Coho, and Interior Fraser River Steelhead.

Fraser Fall 4₁ (Harrison) Chinook

Harrison Chinook has been assessed as *Threatened* by COSEWIC. The PST-agreed to escapement goal for Fall 4₁ (Harrison) Chinook is 75,100 spawners. This escapement goal has been achieved five times in the last decade (2015, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025). The 2025 spawning escapement estimate of approximately 110,000 is above the escapement goal for Harrison Chinook.

Management measures in Canadian ISBM fisheries in 2020 to 2025 were expected to further reduce fishery mortalities compared to 2019. A review of fishery mortalities using the CTC's exploitation rate analysis suggests a reduction of approximately 35% occurred in 2020, 32% in 2021, 78% in 2022, and 64% in 2023⁵, (compared to 2019). The preliminary 2024 ISBM calendar year exploitation rate was 11.3%. The 2025 CYER estimates are not yet available.

Under Chapter Three of the PST, if Canada is not meeting the escapement goal for three consecutive years, Canada is obligated to reduce the ISBM CYER on this stock to below the running three-year average from years that meet the specific inclusion criteria. The average ISBM CYER for Harrison Chinook (2021-2023) was 17.2%. No additional management actions are planned at this time, given escapements in 2022, 2023 and 2024 met the PST escapement objective.

Lower Strait of Georgia (LGS) Chinook

The Cowichan River is an indicator stock of marine survival and exploitation for the LGS fall Chinook. Escapements of Cowichan Chinook have improved since the low point in 2009, exceeding adult escapement targets annually since 2016. Returns of fall run stocks to other LGS systems such as Puntledge and Qualicum have also seen a general increase over the same period.

Summer run stocks in the Nanaimo and Puntledge rivers where escapement trends have remained low or declined have been assessed as *Endangered* in November 2020. A Science Advisory Report (SAR) summarizing the recovery potential assessment (RPA) has been released for East Vancouver Island (EVI) Summer Chinook which includes both the Puntledge and Nanaimo watersheds. East Vancouver Island Summer Chinook exhibit low natural spawner abundance and are highly sensitive to harvest pressures. These populations continue to face multiple threats, including habitat modification, predation, climate driven stressors, and impacts associated with hydropower infrastructure (in the Puntledge watershed). The

⁵ <https://www.psc.org/publications/technical-reports/technical-committee-reports/chinook/ctc-data-sets/>

population is supported by enhancement activities and has historically had ongoing monitoring in the Puntledge system, such as coded wire tagging used to estimate marine survival, exploitation rates (ER), and distribution. In recent years, the tagging program was paused due to low escapement and bacterial kidney disease (BKD) concerns.

DFO Science indicates that recent Chinook management measures, such as time area restrictions, selective harvest requirements, and reduced overall fishing opportunities, have already contributed to lower exploitation rates on EVI Summer Chinook compared to historical levels.

13.1.5.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO INSIDE CHINOOK ISBM FISHERIES

ISBM fisheries are constrained in order to meet PST obligations and domestic management objectives. In some cases, full harvest targets may not be available due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

Given continued poor escapements of Interior Fraser River Steelhead and the designation of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as *Endangered* by COSEWIC, DFO is maintaining a comprehensive, precautionary approach to the management of all fisheries in southern B.C. that are likely to impact this stock of concern. Within the Fraser River (including sub-Areas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10), a 42-day closure will apply to commercial gill net, purse seine, beach seine, and shallow seine fisheries (including EO fisheries) and a 27-day closure will apply to commercial troll fisheries. Further, a 42-day closure will apply to Fraser River recreational fisheries and a 27-day closure will apply to Fraser River FSC fisheries. Areas and dates for the window closure are identified in [Appendix 7](#).

13.1.5.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.1.5.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

The Department consults with First Nations on specific fishing plans for FSC fisheries.

First Nations Food, Social and Ceremonial

Marine Waters

First Nations target local and passing salmon stocks for FSC purposes throughout the Inner South Coast. FSC fisheries for Southern ISBM Chinook in marine areas will not be affected by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

South Coast First Nations fisheries opportunities for mixed Chinook stocks will be permitted in marine areas with the exception of the approaches to the Fraser River (Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9

and 29-10). To improve the collective understanding of stocks of concern, in terms of their migration routes, timing and fisheries impacts, First Nations are encouraged to collaborate with the Department on shaping a catch monitoring and biological sampling plan for fisheries between April 1 and July 15 to provide stock composition information for Chinook.

Non-tidal Waters (excluding Fraser River)

Some First Nations Chinook-directed fisheries occur in freshwater systems throughout Southern Inside waters.

FSC fisheries for Southern ISBM Chinook in freshwater areas outside of the Fraser River system will not be affected by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Fraser River

First Nations target Fraser River Chinook for FSC purposes throughout the Fraser River mainstem and in many tributary areas.

FSC fisheries in the Fraser River, including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10, will be affected by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures. A 27-day rolling window closure will be applied to FSC fisheries according to the times and areas outlined in [Appendix 7](#). These measures will not extend to marine FSC fisheries.

DFO is working with the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) Nation to implement the BC Supreme Court's declaration of an Aboriginal right to fish for food in the south arm of the Fraser River.

Refer to Table 10-1 for Communal Licence Harvest Target Amount in southern B.C./Fraser River First Nations Fisheries. Note that AABM and ISBM Chinook amounts are combined.

Fraser Chinook Single Stock FSC Fisheries (SSFSC)

Similar to the Fraser Sockeye Single Stock FSC Fisheries (SSFSC) there is interest from Fraser First Nations in terminal areas to develop a similar approach for Fraser Chinook where return stability and abundance has been consistently observed compared to other stocks in the aggregate.

Fraser Chinook Single Stock Food, Social and Ceremonial (SSFSC) fisheries for individual Fraser Chinook spawning populations may be considered if the projected number of spawners is expected to exceed the freshwater productive capacity of the system, measured as Spawners at Maximum Sustainable Yield, taking into account migration and environmental conditions. Stock specific spawning requirements may be determined based upon WSP benchmarks, traditional ecological knowledge, and stock-specific information, on a system-by-system basis upon receipt of a terminal access request. Given uncertainties about freshwater capacity, a decision on whether a terminal fishery will proceed will be made in consultation with local First Nations, and any amounts specified for harvest may take into account available information

and associated uncertainties on a range of factors including: stock-specific abundance, projected spawner abundances, productive capacity of the system, stock composition in the proposed fishing area and selectivity of fishing gear. Given the uncertainties of in-season information, the Department may permit only a portion of any estimated surplus to be harvested. Even if fishing opportunities are available, in some cases full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season. Please also note that the Department is working with Nations to explore alternative strategies and language to evaluate terminal and single stock selective Chinook fisheries where abundance permits. This work will continue throughout 2026 and be updated in future IFMPs

Specific Conservation Measures for First Nations Fisheries

Lower Strait of Georgia Chinook

Protective measures may be considered in terminal areas to manage harvest impacts on Chinook stocks of concern. Potential measures will be developed and refined through discussions with First Nations communities prior to the development and implementation of fishing plans.

For 2026, the Department is considering increases to Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) allocations to be accessed by local First Nations targeting Cowichan Chinook, where consistent with conservation objectives. Measures will aim to facilitate this access while ensuring the protection of less abundant stocks. Subject to conservation requirements, additional fishing opportunities may also be considered.

Fraser River Chinook

Fraser River First Nations FSC fisheries will be restricted to limited communal opportunities, unplanned events or first fish ceremonies until approximately July 15 followed by opportunities to target abundant Summer 4₁ Chinook primarily in August. DFO will be working with Fraser River First Nations on specific fishing opportunities with the objective of maintaining overall very low fishing pressure when at-risk stocks may be impacted. This will result in limited and reduced fishery openings or fishing times; actual plans will be announced in-season.

Mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce disturbance to Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within southern B.C. waters and key foraging areas within the Swiftsure Bank area, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Gulf Islands, and near the mouth of the Fraser River. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

Treaty Fisheries

Treaty fisheries targeting Chinook within the Fraser River (including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10) will be subject to closures to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead as outlined in [Appendix 7](#). These measures do not extend to marine Treaty fisheries.

Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) Fisheries (Domestic)

In any year, the TFN Fishing Right Allocation for Chinook Salmon will be determined by an abundance-based formula, based on Canadian TAC that produces an average annual harvest of 625 Fraser River Chinook Salmon based on Fraser River Chinook Salmon returns for the 1982 to 2004 time period. The Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement (TFN FA) is available at: [Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement \(rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca\)](https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca)

Tla'amin Nation Fisheries (Domestic)

The Domestic allocations for Chinook under the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjɪnxʷegəs) are as follows:

In any year, the Tla'amin Fish Allocation for Chinook Salmon is:

Non-terminal Chinook: A maximum of 200 Chinook Salmon, that are not of terminal origin, caught in the Tla'amin Fishing Area. The allocation will be determined by an abundance-based formula. The Tla'amin Fishing Area for all species of Fish and Aquatic Plants is within portions of Pacific Fisheries Management Areas 13, 14, 15, and 16.

Terminal Chinook: A number of Chinook Salmon equal to 25% of the Available Terminal Harvest for Chinook Salmon stocks that originate from a Terminal Harvest Area, if the Minister determines that there is an Available Terminal Harvest for those stocks.

Tla'amin Nation and DFO have collaborated on the development of Biologically Based Benchmarks for selected terminal salmon populations in PFMA 15, which have updated escapement goals and associated harvest management approaches. These changes will be implemented beginning in 2026, with the harvest management frameworks subject to ongoing review in future years

The Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjɪnxʷegəs) is available at:

<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1397152724601/1542999321074>

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under this licence, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by this vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing

harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Fraser River

In the Fraser River watershed, catch monitoring programs are managed through Activity Funding or Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements.

In the lower Fraser River (below Sawmill Creek), monitoring programs implemented typically include landing site or vessel-based collection of catch and effort information paired with validation of effort by vessel patrols or overflights. Specific focus has also been placed on sampling of Chinook Salmon for mark rate information and coded-wire tags (CWTs) to support the Salmon Head Recovery Program. Catch reports are received by DFO from catch monitoring programs on a weekly basis, within 48 hours of a fishery closing.

For fisheries above Sawmill Creek, catch monitoring programs range from basic census type to more enhanced programs that include collecting effort and catch rate information in creel sample programs.

13.1.5.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

Recreational Conservation Measures for Southern Inside ISBM Fisheries

Significant Chinook non-retention measures will be implemented in most South Coast Areas to address conservation concerns for wild Southern BC (including Fraser River) Chinook Salmon. A full list of the management measures implemented by Area is provided below.

ISBM recreational Chinook fisheries in inside waters normally take place from Queen Charlotte Strait south to the Strait of Juan de Fuca throughout the year. Significant amounts of catch and effort occur in waters near Port Hardy, Campbell River, the Strait of Georgia and Southern Vancouver Island including the Juan de Fuca Strait, with both catch and effort peaking during the summer months.

The recreational total annual limit for Chinook from any tidal waters is 10 Chinook per year. Recreational anglers must record all Chinook retained either on their licence, or if mobile internet access is immediately available, the licence holder may alternatively record catch immediately in their National Recreational Licensing System (NRLS) account. The minimum size limit for Chinook in the Queen Charlotte Strait, Johnstone Strait, and the Strait of Georgia is 62 cm. The minimum size limit in waters south of Cadboro Point through Juan de Fuca Strait (Subareas 19-1 to 19-4 and 20-5 to 20-7) is 45 cm. A maximum size limit of 80 cm was introduced

in 2019 as part of a suite of measures to provide further protection to Fraser stream type Chinook although areas and times have varied.

Since 2020, the Department approved a small number of recreational Chinook mark-selective fishery (MSF) opportunities, along with two new MSFs in 2023, all of which will now be included annually in fishery planning processes. Mortality estimates from these MSFs will be incorporated into post-season information for further review. Details of these MSFs can be found in Table 13–13.

Table 13–13 Approved MSF Openings - Southern ISBM

Location*	Fishery Type	Date Range	Size Restrictions	Daily Retention	Possession
Area 12 (Broughton Archipelago) Area 13 (Bute Inlet and Ramsay Arm) Area 15 (Homfray Channel and Toba Inlet) Area 16 (Sechelt and Jervis Inlets)	Mixed-bag MSF	April 1 to July 14	80 cm maximum unmarked; 62 cm minimum all	1 (Marked or unmarked)	2
Areas 17, 18 and 19 (Gulf Islands and Saanich Inlet)	Pure Mark Selective	April 1 to July 14 (Area 17) or July 31 (Areas 18 and 19)	62 cm minimum marked	1 (Marked only)	2

Location*	Fishery Type	Date Range	Size Restrictions	Daily Retention	Possession
Area 19 (Haro Strait)	Pure Mark Selective	April 1 to May 31	45 cm minimum (Subareas 19-1, 19-3 to 19-4) or 62 cm minimum (Subareas 19-5 and 19-6)	1 (Marked only)	2
Area 20 (Beecher Bay)	Pure Mark Selective	April 1 to July 31	45 cm minimum marked	1 (Marked only)	2

* Note: Fisheries have been grouped according to similar fishery characteristics. Each area represents a separate fishery and is evaluated independently.

A full list of the 2026-2027 Fraser River Chinook management measures are listed below (excluding the approved MSFs listed above or any terminal fishery openings/closures). Additional actions will be taken in 2026 to further reduce recreational impacts on Summer 5₂ Chinook. For 2026 the department will be implementing new recreational fishery gear restrictions in salmon directed fisheries and reducing the maximum size from 80 cm to 75 cm for Chinook salmon that may be retained in recreational fisheries in southwestern Vancouver Island marine waters.

More information can also be found in Section 13.1.5.1 and Table 13-9.

Queen Charlotte Sound - Area 111

- *April 1 to July 14: Two (2) Chinook per day*
- *July 15 to July 31: One (1) Chinook per day, max 80 cm*
- *August 1 to March 31: Two (2) Chinook per day*

Seymour Inlet - Subareas 11-3 to 11-10

- *April 1 to June 30: Two (2) Chinook per day*
- *July 1 to August 31: No retention of Chinook*
- *September 1 to March 31: Two (2) Chinook per day*

Since 2023 the Department has worked to further understand stock composition and abundance of Chinook inside Seymour Inlet (Area 11) to support informed management decisions for fisheries in the area. Findings to date have been inconclusive however the Department is considering removal of the Chinook non-retention regulations currently in effect in Subareas 11-3 to 11-10 in July and August. Additional sampling is planned to continue to further assess the stock composition of Chinook stocks during recreational fisheries in Subareas 11-1 and 11-2, and all of Area 11 should retention be permitted.

Queen Charlotte Strait and Johnstone Strait – Area 12 (excluding Subarea 12-14):

- *April 1 to July 14: No retention of Chinook*
- *July 15 to August 16: One (1) Chinook per day, max 80 cm*
- *August 17 to August 31: One (1) Chinook per day*
- *September 1 to March 31: Two (2) Chinook per day*

For clarity, Chinook daily limits remain at two (2) per day all year in Subarea 12-14.

Strait of Georgia – North – Areas 13 to 17, Subareas 29-1 and 29-2:

- *April 1 to July 14: No retention of Chinook*
- *July 15 to August 31: One (1) Chinook per day, max 80 cm*
- *September 1 to March 31: Two (2) Chinook per day*

In portions of Area 13, in those waters as defined by tidal Conditions of Licence (COL) and known as the Campbell River Special Management Zone (CRSMZ), there is no maximum size limit on Chinook. Chinook retained in this area must be recorded on the tidal licence as caught in 13 SMZ per the COL.

Strait of Georgia – South, and Juan de Fuca – Areas 18 and 19 (excluding Subarea 19-2 which is closed to all fishing activity), Subareas 20-3 to 20-7, Area 28, and Subareas 29-3 to 29-5 (with the exception of those portions of Areas 28 and 29 listed below), August length changes in the Juan De Fuca Management Area, and Subarea 29-8:

- *April 1 to July 31: No retention of Chinook*
- *August 1 to August 31: One (1) Chinook per day, max 80 cm*
- *September 1 to March 31: Two (2) Chinook per day**

*For the month of March, in Subareas 19-1, 19-3, 19-4, and Subareas 20-4 to 20-7 (those waters near Victoria between Cadboro Point and Sombrio Point), the daily limit of Chinook is two (2) per day, hatchery-marked only, greater than the minimum length of 45 cm.

Juan De Fuca Management Areas Subarea (19-1, 19-3, 19-4, and 20-3 to 20-7):

- *August 1 to August 31: One (1) Chinook per day, max 75 cm*

Subarea 28-9:

- *August 12 to August 31: One (1) Chinook per day*

Portions of Southern Strait of Georgia, Howe Sound and Burrard Inlet – Subareas 28-7 to 28-9; Subarea 28-1; and that portion of Subarea 28-2 that lies southerly of a line drawn due east from Halkett Point on Gambier Island (49° 26.735'N, 123° 19.302'W) to a point (49° 26.550'N, 123° 14.317'W) on the mainland corresponding with the southeast point of the Lions Bay RCA; and those portions of 29-3 to 29-5 that lie east of a line from Gower Point (49° 23.021'N, 123° 32.166'W) near Gibsons to Shah Point on the southern tip of Valdes Island (49° 01.695'N, 123° 35.721'W):

- *April 1 to Aug 31: No fishing for Chinook (Notwithstanding above-noted retention opportunities in Subarea 28-9)*
- *Sept 1 to March 31: Two (2) Chinook per day*

Juan de Fuca Strait (West) Subareas 20-1 and 20-2:

- *April 1 to July 14: No retention of Chinook*
- *July 15 to July 31: One (1) Chinook per day, max 80 cm.*
- *August 1 to March 31: Two (2) Chinook per day*

Additional opportunities for Chinook retention may be announced in local areas and/or terminal locations when in-season abundance permits and potential hatchery surpluses have been identified. Similarly, increased fishery restrictions may also be announced in-season to provide additional protections for local stocks (e.g., Puntledge Summer Chinook) as needed.

Fraser River Mouth (Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10), Fraser River tidal waters (29-11 to 29-17) and the Fraser River in Region 2:

In addition to the measures to protect Chinook outlined below, Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures will be implemented in the Fraser River recreational fishery following the Interior Fraser River Coho window closure. A 42-day rolling window closure will apply to Fraser River recreational fisheries in the areas and dates listed in [Appendix 7](#) (including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10). These measures do not extend to other marine recreational fisheries seaward of identified Fraser River mouth Subareas.

Due to concerns regarding the impacts of non-compliance activities on non-target stocks and species, including stocks of concern, within portions of the Chilliwack/Vedder River in recent years, the Department will consider implementing in-season area-time closures within this river system to offer protection to co-migrating Sockeye Salmon.

In all areas, unless otherwise specified there is *no fishing for salmon*. If Sockeye-directed fisheries proceed in these areas in 2026, there will be no fishing for Chinook Salmon until stocks of concern are unlikely to be encountered. Given historic run-timing of Fraser Chinook stocks this is expected to be no earlier than September 11.

New for 2026-2027: Changes to hatchery Chinook retention limits/size limits include:

Capilano River: August 1 to November 30 – Four (4) Chinook per day (removal of size limit)

Coquitlam River: September 1 to December 31 – One (1) Chinook per day.

Fraser River: some exceptions listed below under tributaries directed on Summer 4₁ Chinook in terminal areas.

Fraser River, Region 3:

In all areas, unless otherwise specified, there is *no fishing for salmon*. If Sockeye-directed fisheries proceed outside the times and areas below in 2026, there will be no fishing for Chinook Salmon until stocks of concern are unlikely to be encountered (see Table 13–14 for timing of Fraser Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook in these areas). Given historical run-timing of Fraser Chinook stocks, this is expected to be no earlier than August 28.

South Thompson River: August 16 to Sept. 22 – Four (4) per day, two (2) over 50 cm. From the green can buoy near outlet of Little River, including Little Shuswap Lake, to the fishing white triangle fishing boundary approximately 100 m downstream of Campbell Creek.

Kamloops Lake: August 28 to Sept. 22 – Four (4) per day, two (2) over 50 cm

Thompson River: August 28 to Sept. 22 – Four (4) per day, none (0) over 50 cm. From the white triangle fishing boundary signs just downstream of Gold Pan Provincial Park to the easterly border of the Skihist Ecological reserve along the Thompson River located at 50°25'N, 121°31'W, this is approximately 5 km northeast of Lytton at Skihist Park.

Table 13–14: Fraser Spring and Summer 5₂ Chinook stocks that migrate through Region 3 recreational fishery areas and start timing of their spawning in natal streams.

Fishery Location	Fishery Opening	Stock Name	Spawning Start Date
South Thompson River	Aug 16 to Sept 22	Eagle	3-Aug
		Salmon (ST)	20-Jul
		Scotch	24-Jul
		Seymour	8-Aug

Kamloops Lake	Aug 28 to Sept 22	Mahood	30-Aug
		Clearwater	26-Aug
		Raft	23-Aug
		Barriere	23-Aug
		North Thompson	1-Aug
		Lemieux	24-Jul
		Eagle	3-Aug
		Salmon (ST)	20-Jul
		Scotch	24-Jul
		Seymour	8-Aug
Thompson River	Aug 28 to Sept 22	Mahood	30-Aug
		Clearwater	26-Aug
		Raft	23-Aug
		Barriere	23-Aug
		North Thompson	1-Aug
		Lemieux	24-Jul
		Eagle	3-Aug
		Salmon (ST)	20-Jul
		Scotch	24-Jul
		Seymour	8-Aug

Fraser River, Region 5A – Fraser Watershed

In all areas, unless otherwise specified there is *no fishing for salmon*. If Sockeye-directed fisheries proceed in Region 5A in 2026, there will be no fishing for Chinook Salmon.

Fraser River, Region 7

In all areas, unless otherwise specified there is *no fishing for salmon*. If Sockeye-directed fisheries proceed in Region 7 in 2026, there will be no fishing for Chinook Salmon.

Fraser River, Region 8

In all areas, unless otherwise specified there is no fishing for salmon. If Sockeye-directed fisheries proceed in Region 8 in 2026, there will be no fishing for Chinook salmon except for the following areas and times:

Mabel Lake: August 16 to September 12 – Four (4) per day, only two (2) over 50 cm.

Lower Shuswap River: August 16 to September 12 – Four (4) per day, only two (2) over 50 cm.

Upstream from white triangular fishing boundary signs upstream of Mara Bridge to Mabel Lake. No fishing 50 meters upstream and downstream of the Trinity Valley Road Bridge from June 15 to November 15.

Lower Georgia Strait (LGS) Chinook

Management measures are in place to protect Lower Strait of Georgia Chinook, including the Nanaimo, Chemainus, and Cowichan River Chinook stocks. In the past, seasonal time and area closures in specific locations in the northern Strait of Georgia (Area 13, 14 and 15) were implemented to protect Cowichan Chinook; however, these were lifted in 2019. The management measures, including finfish closures and Chinook non-retention areas in the approach waters, Nanaimo to Saanich Inlet have remained in place in recent years.

Since 2016, Cowichan River Chinook salmon have consistently exceeded the annual escapement objective of 6,500 adult spawners (non-jack). For 2026, the Chinook Technical Committee's bilaterally agreed to Chinook salmon (non-jack) forecast for the Cowichan River is estimated at approximately 35,000 fish, highlighting that recent returns and the forecast remain well above the established escapement objective. The Department and Cowichan Tribes continue to collaborate on a review of the Cowichan River Chinook salmon escapement objectives and stock assessment methods used to estimate in river abundance.

For the 2026 season, the Department is considering increases to Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) allocations to be accessed by local First Nations targeting Cowichan River Chinook salmon. Subject to conservation requirements, other limited fishing opportunities may also be considered. Fishing opportunities, if implemented, would be administered using a precautionary approach.

Updates to recreational fisheries will continue to be provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch

and effort information in this fishery. South Coast stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

Fraser Watershed

Creel surveys are conducted in portions of the lower Fraser River and select tributaries in order to estimate recreational catch and effort for the times and areas surveyed. Typically, the creel survey in the lower Fraser River mainstem begins when the mainstem is opened to recreational salmon fishing; however, over the last number of years, the survey end date has been variable (mid-September to end of November). The creel surveys conducted on the Chilliwack River and Nicomen-Norrish recreational fisheries have remained stable over the last number of years both in times and areas (Chilliwack is surveyed from mid-September to mid-November and Nicomen-Norrish is surveyed from early October to the end of November).

Similar to recent years, catch monitoring programs in the Fraser watershed upstream of Alexandria will range from no monitoring to fisher-reported catch to highly-intensive creel surveys. The expected effort and catch in a fishery, harvest rate, potential bycatch, and any biological sampling requirements will be taken into account when planning the catch monitoring program for these areas.

13.1.5.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

There are no directed commercial Chinook fisheries in Southern Inside marine waters and Chinook non-retention is in place in most times and areas in fisheries directed on other species.

Allocation

Table 13–15: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South - Inside	11 to 20, 29	1.0%	3.0%	90.0% ^a	0.0%	6.0%

Notes on Chinook allocations (south):

^adirected Fraser River Chinook fishery

Southern ISBM Commercial Chinook Fisheries

Due to concerns for wild southern B.C. (including Fraser River) stocks, no directed Chinook fisheries are planned and there will be non-retention in fisheries directed at other species.

A combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will also be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to

these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

There will be no directed Chinook fisheries and non-retention is in effect in fisheries directed at other species for Area B Seine, Area D Gill Net, Area E Gill Net, and Area H Troll.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information for all commercial fisheries.

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the Conditions of Licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

13.1.5.5.4 ESSR Fisheries

ESSR fisheries may occur at DFO hatchery facilities that have a surplus of returning hatchery Chinook. In past years, ESSR fisheries have taken place at:

- Capilano Hatchery – Mainland B.C.
- Chilliwack River Hatchery – Lower Fraser
- Chehalis Hatchery – Lower Fraser
- Puntledge Hatchery – Strait of Georgia
- Big Qualicum Hatchery – Strait of Georgia
- Little Qualicum Hatchery – Strait of Georgia
- Nanaimo River – Strait of Georgia

13.2 SOUTHERN CHUM SALMON FISHING PLAN

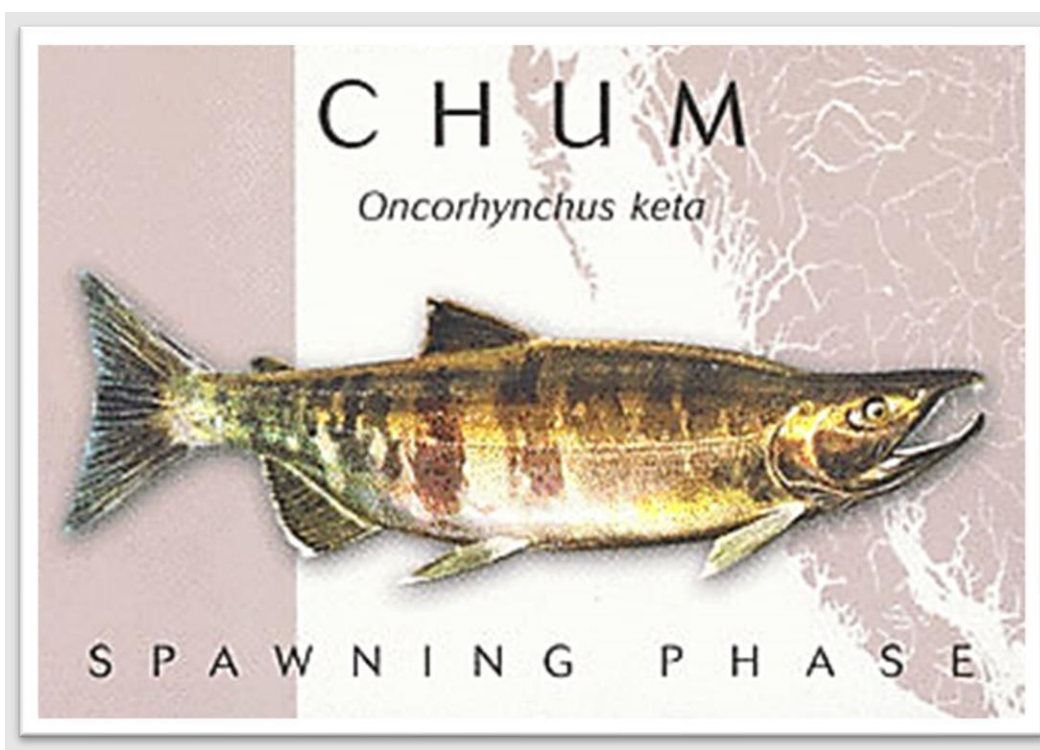
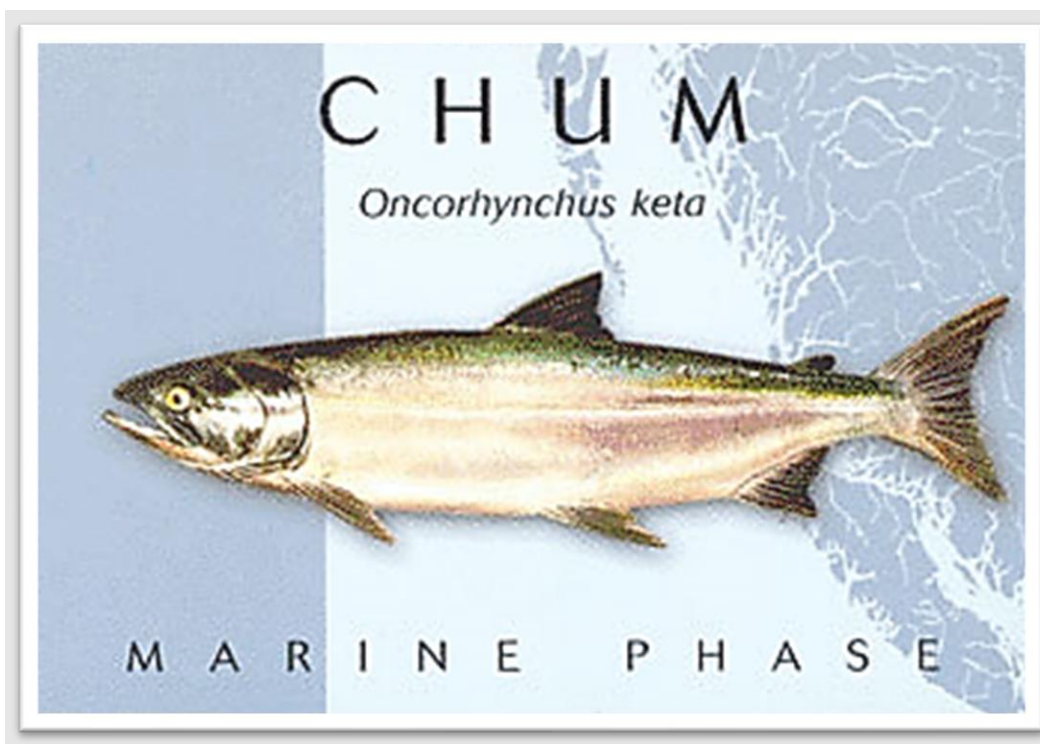


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13.2.1 SOUTHERN CHUM OVERVIEW

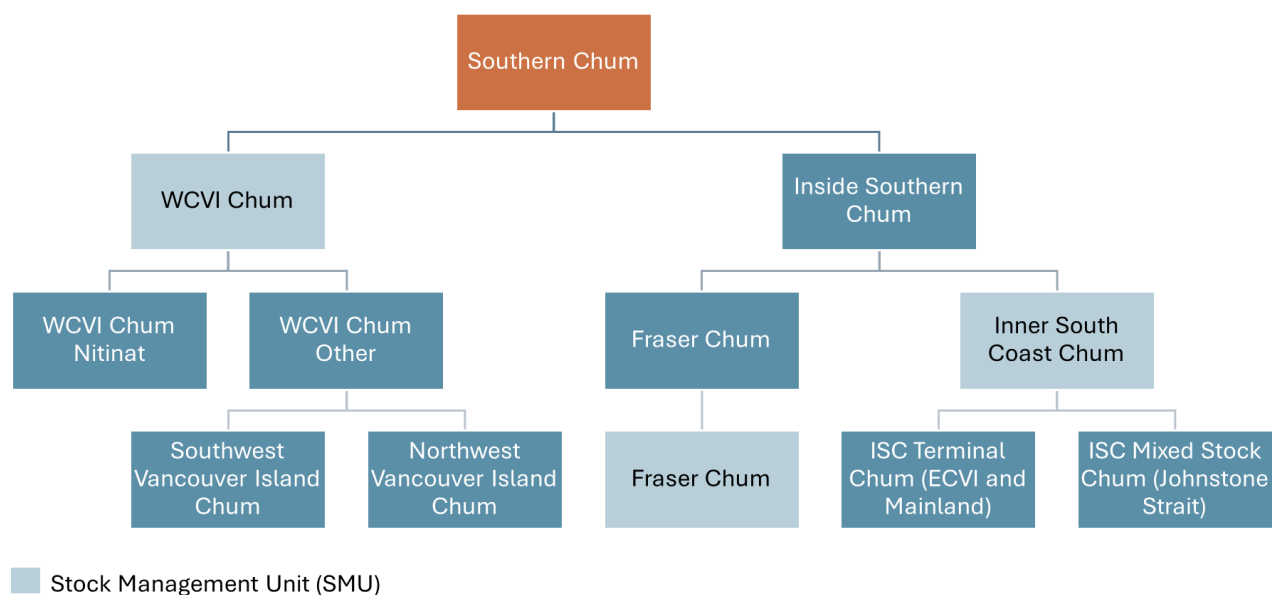


Figure 13–6: Overview of Southern Chum

13.2.1.1 SOUTHERN CHUM ENHANCEMENT INFORMATION:

The major DFO operation enhancement facilities that produce Chum are:

South Coast Area:

- Big Qualicum River Spawning Channel
- Conuma River hatchery
- Nitinat River hatchery
- Puntledge River hatchery

Fraser River Area:

- Capilano River hatchery
- Chehalis River hatchery
- Chilliwack River hatchery
- Inch Creek hatchery
- Tenderfoot Creek hatchery
- Weaver Spawning Channel

SEP Production Plans and Post-Season Production Data

The following website contains links to summaries of the most recent years' Post-Season Production from DFO and DFO-partnered hatcheries, as well as the current version of the SEP Production Plan. Note that from February to June each year the Production Plan is in draft form and is subject to change. From June to the following February, the Final Production Plan is available.

[IFMP SEP Data Tables | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ifmp-sep-data-tables/pacific-region/fisheries-and-oceans-canada)

13.2.1.2 SOUTHERN CHUM – SEP PROPOSALS OR UPDATES FOR 2026

Conuma River Hatchery

The release target of 500k chum each into Canton and Sucwoa will cease, while increasing Conuma River seapen releases by 500k, for an expected net neutral total hatchery-origin chum return to Tlupana Inlet. This shift is driven by seapen releases demonstrating higher survival and return efficiency, more effective production with reduced broodstock needs, and sufficient existing seapen capacity, with net-neutral cost/logistics impacts.

13.2.2 INSIDE SOUTHERN CHUM - OVERVIEW

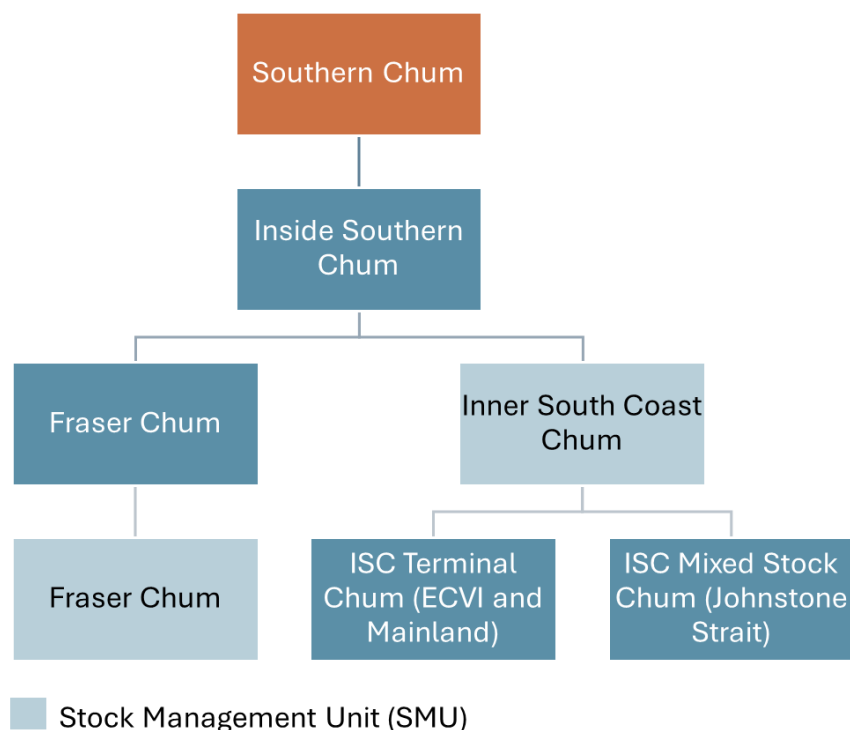


Figure 13–7: Overview of Inside Southern Chum

Inside Southern Chum (ISC) Salmon spawn throughout Inner South Coast and in the Fraser River watershed, with Fraser stocks typically making up a significant portion of the returning abundance. ISC are managed in two distinct fall-timed (mid-September into December) groups: Fraser Chum with two Conservation Units (CUs) and ISC Terminal with 7 CUs. The three groups of fisheries targeting these stocks are ISC mixed-stock (Johnstone Strait), ISC Terminal (ECVI and Mainland), and the Fraser River (Figure 13–7).

In addition to these fall-timed populations, there are summer-timed Chum within the ISC which have distinct timing (late July through to mid-September). In general, summer-timed Chum are passively managed as bycatch in Fraser River fisheries directed on Sockeye and Pink Salmon. Due to the absence of scientific information on the impacts of Fraser Sockeye and Pink fisheries on summer-timed Chum populations, the Department will follow the precautionary approach and not permit the retention of Chum bycatch during Fraser Sockeye and Pink fisheries. The use of at-sea observers will be required to gather samples during these fisheries.

The Johnstone Strait mixed-stock fishery harvests the ISC aggregate and is managed to a 20% exploitation rate target. There are fisheries on individual stocks in terminal fisheries throughout the ISC area and in the Fraser River. ISC terminal fisheries are managed to spawning goals at a more local level than the Conservation Units identified under the Wild Salmon Policy. The

Fraser River terminal Chum Salmon fishery is managed under an abundance-based harvest plan built around an aggregate spawning goal and a terminal run size, which are described in the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

Assessment of Inside Southern Chum relies on in-season test fisheries (in Johnstone Strait and the Fraser River), which provide indications of relative Chum abundance, migration timing, stock compositions, and other biological information. Terminal river escapements for Inside Southern Chum populations are typically estimated through visual surveys of index systems with some higher-quality estimates from other key systems (i.e., Harrison River Chum mark-recapture and ARIS fixed-site programs on the Cowichan and Nanaimo Rivers). Coverage of visual surveys has declined since the 1980s in terms of the number of surveyed systems, but the remaining surveys still cover most of the production for the aggregate.

Hatchery programs for ISC are mostly done to supplement harvest (Chehalis River, Chilliwack River, Inch Creek, Weaver Creek, Big Qualicum River, Little Qualicum River, Puntledge River), but there are also some rebuilding programs (e.g., Nimpkish Chum).

13.2.3 INSIDE SOUTHERN CHUM MIXED-STOCK FISHERIES

13.2.3.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

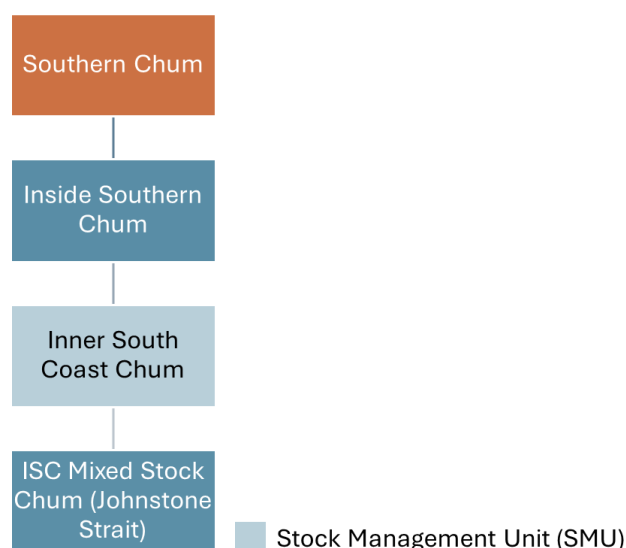


Figure 13–8: Overview of Inside Southern Chum Mixed Stock Fisheries

The Inside Southern Chum mixed-stock fishery targets fall run Chum stocks that migrate through Johnstone Strait. Most of these fish spawn in systems adjacent to Johnstone Strait, in the Strait of Georgia, and in the Fraser River, though a small component is bound for Washington State systems. The main components of the harvest are the Mid-Vancouver Island (MVI) and

the Fraser River stock groupings. This fishery intercepts enhanced Chum from Big Qualicum hatchery, Little Qualicum hatchery, Puntledge hatchery, Chehalis hatchery, Chilliwack hatchery, Inch Creek hatchery, and Weaver Creek spawning channel.

The migration timing of these Fall Chum stocks in the Johnstone Strait fishing area ranges from September to November with the peak typically early to mid-October. Mixed-stock fisheries occur in Areas 12 and 13, with terminal opportunities where surpluses are identified. Harvesters include First Nations (FSC fisheries), recreational, and commercial (seine, gill net and troll).

Canadian conservation units that may be encountered in this fishery include:

- Fraser Canyon (Fall)
- Lower Fraser (Fall)
- Bute Inlet
- Loughborough
- Northeast Vancouver Island
- Southern Coastal Streams
- Upper Knight
- Howe Sound - Burrard Inlet
- Strait of Georgia

13.2.3.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.2.3.2.1 Pre-season

Table 13–16: Mixed Stock 2026 Salmon Outlook

Management Area	Stock Outlook
Johnstone Strait and Mainland Inlet (Area 11 to 13)	It is anticipated that the ISC Chum return in 2026 will be improved from those observed in 2025, largely due to improved escapement for the dominant brood year (2022), and generally improved ocean conditions. Relative to the 2024 return, the brood year abundance for the 2026 return (2021-2023) was somewhat higher, particularly for the dominant brood year (2022). However, ocean productivity indicators were not as favourable as those for the 2024 return year. Small improvements in Summer Chum abundance are likely in 2026, as marine survival appears to have improved but brood year abundance was generally poor across the South Coast.
Strait of Georgia	For 2026, Mid-Island systems (Puntledge, Little Qualicum, Big Qualicum) are expected to remain well below target levels. Abundance of stocks in the southern Strait of Georgia such as Cowichan, Nanaimo, and Goldstream are variable: expectations are for Cowichan to come in well below escapement target, whereas Nanaimo and Goldstream are expected to be near or just above target. Jervis/Narrows Inlet stocks are forecast to be well below target abundance in 2026.
Fraser River (CUs: Fraser Canyon and Lower Fraser)	Fraser Chum Salmon SMU is dominated by the Lower Fraser Chum CU. For 2026 the Lower Fraser Chum CU is assigned an Outlook Category 2. (2025 Outlook Category was 2). Returns in 2026 will be dominated by 4-year-old brood from the 2022 escapement of 1,130,000 spawners. Spawning escapement in 2021 (530,000 spawners) and 2023 (620,000 spawners) were low escapement brood years and are not expected to contribute significantly to the 2026 return. The high escapement brood year and recently observed increases in productivity contrast with the observed long-term decrease in productivity. Lower Fraser River Chum Salmon spawning escapement has failed to reach the management target in six of the last eight years (2018-2021, 2023). The 2025 in-season terminal run estimate was 616,000 fish and the 2025 preliminary spawner escapement estimate is 830,000 fish. Spawning escapements failed to outperform brood for 2017-2021, while spawning escapements outperformed brood in the most recent four years (2022-2025). Long term productivity is declining, and the Lower Fraser Chum CU was assigned a WSP Rapid Status Assessment of RED in 2025.

13.2.3.2.2 In-season

The upper Johnstone Strait (Area 12) Chum seine test fishery uses standardized methods of test fishing, based on specific set locations. Two vessels, one fishing the Blinkhorn area (Subareas

12-3 & 12-4) of the Vancouver Island shoreline and the other fishing the Double Bay area (Subareas 12-5 & 12-6) are used to assess abundance and biologically sample the stocks passing through the upper Johnstone Strait area. Test fishery information is used to determine whether stocks are at or above the Lower Fishery Reference Point (LFRP) and is also used for post-season representation of the timing and spread of the aggregate return.

Table 13–17: Planned Chum Test Fisheries

Test Fishery	Proposed Proponent	Test Fishery Purpose	Potential Dates (preliminary ^a)	
			Start	End
Area 12	ʔNamgis/A-Tlegay	ISC Mixed Stock Chum	Sep 15	Nov 3

^a All dates are subject to change based on in-season factors. In-season information from initial test fisheries is important for determining the timing of subsequent test fisheries.

13.2.3.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Measures to protect co-migrating Interior Fraser River Steelhead will be continued in 2026. These actions are described generally in Section 13.2.5.4 and detailed measures are provided for specific fisheries contained in Section 13.2.5.5

Harvest Approach for Mixed-Stock Chum Fisheries in Johnstone Strait

In Johnstone Strait, a fixed harvest rate approach was initiated in 2002. It was agreed that the exploitation rate would be limited to 20% implemented through a fixed effort approach, with two seine openings and limited gill net and troll opportunities through the month of October. This implementation approach was assessed through modeling and testing of assumptions by in-season mark-recapture (conducted in 2000-2002) to estimate harvest rates, fleet efficiencies, and migration rates of Chum through the mixed-stock fishing area. Many of the parameters (run timing and spread) required for the planning of these fisheries were obtained through the existing Chum test fishery. While cautious in the mixed stock areas, this approach provides a more stable opportunity compared to the previous stepped harvest rate approach (also known as Clockwork).

The level of exploitation in Johnstone Strait and a critical abundance threshold of 1.0 million Inside Southern Chum aggregate (Johnstone Strait, Strait of Georgia and Fraser stocks) used to manage both Canadian and U.S. fisheries is identified within the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST)

revised Annex IV Chapter 6. The PST defines this as a critical threshold, and it is used as a LFRP for commercial fisheries. The critical abundance threshold for the ISC aggregate provides a reference point to either initiate (>1.0 million) or suspend (<1.0 million) the mixed-stock fisheries in Johnstone Strait and U.S. waters. Of the overall 20% exploitation rate, 5% is set aside for FSC, test, and recreational fisheries, as well as a commercial harvest buffer. The remaining 15% of passing stocks is targeted by commercial fisheries, which are organized using historical catch and effort fishing data. The 15% commercial harvest is allocated between the purse seine, gill net and troll fisheries following commercial salmon allocation arrangements. The implementation of the management strategy in Johnstone Strait has three distinct benefits:

1. Minimizes potential impacts on less-productive stocks that are not following the aggregate abundance pattern;
2. Improves stability and predictability for harvesters; and
3. In periods of high abundance, increased terminal opportunities will be developed to focus harvest on those stocks.

Table 13–18: Fishery Reference Points and Harvest Plan for Mixed-Stock Chum Fisheries in Johnstone Strait

Run Size Range*	Harvest Guideline	Exploitation Rate Range**
0 – 1 Million	Non-commercial fisheries only. Refer to Table 13–28 and Section 13.2.5.5.2 for recreational decision-making guidelines. Refer to Section 13.2.5.5.1 for FSC decision-making guidelines.	up to 5%
Lower Fishery Reference Point for Commercial Fisheries = 1 Million Inside Southern Chum run size		
More than 1 Million	Commercial harvest up to 15% ER, and non-commercial fisheries at 5% ER.	up to 20%

* Run size is defined as aggregate abundance of Inside Southern Chum.

** Exploitation rate is defined as % of the aggregate abundance caught in Canadian fisheries.

Table 13–19: Summary of key decision points for the management of the East Coast Vancouver Island (ECVI) recreational Chum fishery when Critical Abundance Threshold <1 Million

Johnstone Strait Chum Abundance	Fraser River Run Size	ECVI Monitored Systems* (Puntledge River, Qualicum River, Little Qualicum River, Nanaimo River, Cowichan River, Goldstream River)	Marine Recreational Fishery
<1 Million Critical Threshold not achieved	916,000 to 1,050,000	50% or less of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	Open full limits
		Greater than 50% of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	
	800,000 to 916,000	50% or less of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	Consider reduced Chum retention limits
		Greater than 50% of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	
	500,000 to 800,000	50% or less of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	Consider reduced Chum retention limits
		Greater than 50% of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	Chum non-retention
	<500,000	50% or less of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	Chum non-retention
		Greater than 50% of currently assessed ECVI systems tracking below escapement	

*The Department will consider available information from systems that are monitored in season. However, it may or may not include those systems that encounter operational or weather issues that impact assessments (e.g., high water events; failure of in-river equipment).

The harvest guidelines for mixed-stock fisheries in Johnstone Strait are used for pre-season planning, in-season implementation, and post-season review:

Pre-Season: The pre-season planning model considers average migration timing and spread of the Inside Southern Chum aggregate, historical gear efficiencies and

anticipated effort and distribution of effort by gear type (Area B purse seine, Area D gill net, and Area H troll).

- Outputs from the model illustrate the exploitation (differing harvest strategies) by gear type and are presented as scenarios to the Chum Working Group. Participants in the Chum Working Group finalize a pre-season fishing plan.
- Decision rules and fisheries plans for the mixed-stock Chum commercial fisheries taking place in Johnstone Strait will consider the delayed start of commercial fisheries due to the IFR Steelhead measures and associated reduced ER approach will be developed in consultation with local First Nations and stakeholders.

In-season: Test fishing CPUE data is tracked daily and compared to previous years of estimated run sizes. Fisheries are conducted as per the pre-season fishing plan if test fishery catches indicate a run size greater than the LFRP.

Post-Season: Test fishery information is used for post-season representation of the timing and spread of the aggregate return.

13.2.3.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO INSIDE SOUTHERN CHUM MIXED STOCK FISHERIES

For Inside Southern Chum Salmon, a critical threshold (or Lower Fishery Reference Point), where little or no harvesting occurs, is defined as 1.0 million in Chapter 6 of the PST.

Commercial opportunities for Chum may be constrained prior to late September to achieve Coho management objectives.

Given ongoing declines in IFR Steelhead escapement, and the recent assessment of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as *Endangered* by COSEWIC, DFO is implementing a precautionary approach to the management of those fisheries in Southern B.C. that are likely to impact this stock of concern. In Johnstone Strait, a rolling window closure of 42 days will apply to all commercial gill net and purse seine fisheries and a 27-day closure will apply to commercial troll fisheries.

The implementation of the management strategy minimizes impacts on less-productive stocks that are not tracking the aggregate abundance pattern.

Schedules and fishing dates will be confirmed pre-season following consultation with industry, First Nations, and stakeholders through the Chum Working Group process.

13.2.3.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.2.3.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food, Social and Ceremonial

FSC fisheries for mixed-stock Chum will not be impacted by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

First Nations target local salmon stocks for FSC purposes throughout the Inner South Coast.

FSC mixed stock Chum fisheries may be reduced if the JST critical abundance threshold is less than 1.0 million and Fraser River escapement is less than 500,000. Discussions will occur in-season with local First Nations if the Inside Southern Chum abundance is tracking low.

Refer to Table 10–1 - Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts in Southern BC/Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements, if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under these licences, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by the vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Treaty Fisheries

Tla'amin Fisheries (Domestic)

Tla'amin Domestic fisheries for mixed stock Chum will not be impacted by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

The Tla'amin Fishing Area for all species of fish and aquatic plants is within portions of Pacific Fisheries Management Areas 13, 14, 15, and 16.

The Domestic allocation for Chum Salmon under the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjuxw'egəs) is a maximum of 2,000 Chum Salmon, that are not of terminal origin, caught in the Tla'amin Fishing Area. An abundance-based formula has not yet been determined.

The Tla'amin Nation provides catch reports to the Department through the Aboriginal Harvest Management System (AHMS). The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing time period, location of harvest, harvest count by species, harvest effort, and biological samples.

13.2.3.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

For 2026, the Department will continue to use the Salmon Outlook to inform recreational Chum fishery planning. Due to the outlook and expectation that commercial harvests will occur on Southern BC Chum, the recreational fishery will begin the season with a limit of two (2) per day. Commercial opportunities and recreational retention rules will be informed by in-season estimates of abundance.

Preliminary expectations are modest for 2026 for both the Fraser River and the South Coast Chum stocks, with preliminary Outlook categories of 2-3.

Should in-season estimates of abundances indicate a sufficient harvestable surplus of Chum, as described above, the Department will continue with the in-season management approach to guide retention limits for Chum salmon in marine recreational fisheries. Additional decision guidelines are outlined in section 13.2.5.3 (Table 13–29) and are intended to be used in conjunction with the existing in-season decision guidelines for all sectors (Table 13–28) in years when the mixed-stock Chum abundance in Johnstone Strait is estimated to be below the 1.0 million LFRP. In this circumstance (and if the mixed-stock commercial fisheries are not proceeding), the Department will review other in-season data in sequence, considering the Fraser River in-season run size estimate, followed by the escapement trends for various monitored systems in the Strait of Georgia, to make a determination on what management measures to implement in the marine recreational Chum fishery. As outlined in Table 13–29, these measures may include full limits, reduced limits, or non-retention, depending on the Chum abundance in the Fraser River and throughout the Strait of Georgia.

Updates will be provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website (<http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>).

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Programs including creel surveys, logbooks, and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to collect recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast Stock Assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

13.2.3.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

Allocation

Canadian commercial fisheries are managed to try and achieve allocation targets between fleets for all Inside Southern Chum harvests (Table 13–20). Commercial fishery allocations take into account catches from: Johnstone Strait mixed-stock fisheries and terminal area fisheries in inside waters, including the Fraser River. Commercial allocation sharing arrangements in Johnstone Strait are: Area B Seine – 77%; Area D Gill Net – 17%; and Area H Troll – 6%. The Johnstone Strait Chum allocations are used to guide pre-season fishing effort inputs into the fishery planning model. As the fishery is managed based on effort, actual catch has not been used to adjust fisheries for the mixed-stock Johnstone Strait Chum fishery. Where abundance permits, terminal area fishing opportunities are used to try and balance the overall ISC allocations below.

Table 13–20: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan (from the 2015–current period)

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Inside	11 to 19, 28 to 29	63.0%	19.2%	12.0%	0.0%	5.8%

Inside Southern Chum - Mixed-Stock (Johnstone Strait) Commercial Fisheries

ISC mixed-stock fisheries (Areas 12/13): Target fall-run Chum, with seine, gill net and troll gear. Specific fishing plans will be determined pre-season following consultation with the Chum Working Group. A Chum Working Group meeting will be scheduled pre-season to begin this planning process. The fishing plan for Johnstone Strait mixed-stock fisheries usually follows the general outline:

Area B Seine

A 42-day rolling window closure will be implemented in 2026 to protect co-migrating IFR Steelhead. Openings may be scheduled following the IFR Steelhead closure (preliminary fishing dates will be determined at the pre-season Chum Working Group meeting).

In 2026, the harmonized window closure approach may be selected by the seine fleet in JST (see description below). Openings may occur over one or two days depending on the number of vessels that participate in the fishery. Fishery extensions may occur if effort is low on the first day of the fishery. Environmental conditions may be taken into account when determining the fishing period.

Area D Gill Net

Since 2021, the Area D Gill Net mixed-stock Chum fishery has been closed to protect IFR Steelhead, which is a stock of conservation concern. For any commercial fisheries that are closed, the allocations will remain with the original fleet and fish will be allowed to pass to spawning grounds. Opportunities for additional commercial harvest may be considered in locations where stocks of concern will not be encountered.

Area H Troll

A 27-day rolling window closure will be implemented in 2026 to protect co-migrating IFR Steelhead. Troll fisheries may be scheduled following the IFR Steelhead closure (preliminary fishing dates will be determined at the pre-season Chum Working Group meeting). This fishery is planned to occur as an Individual Transferable Effort (ITE) demonstration fishery (see details below in demonstration fishery section). Troll fisheries in Johnstone Strait are not planned during regular Area B Seine openings when and where possible. In 2026, the harmonized window closure approach may be selected by the troll fleet in JST. Environmental conditions may be taken into account when determining the fishing period.

New for 2026: the Area H Harvest Committee has submitted a Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework (CSAF) demonstration fishery proposal for a two-boat, limited entry Chum-directed fishery in PFMA 13 for 6 days during the latter period of the 27-day IFR Steelhead window closure.

Inside Southern Chum – Johnstone Strait Harmonized Window Closure

The harmonized window closure is a combined fishing area comprised of the lower portion of Area 12 and the upper portion of Area 13. The purpose of the harmonized window closure is to maintain fishing opportunity in JST while aligning with the intent of the IFR Steelhead rolling window closure. Fishing opportunities within the harmonized fishing area commence October 12 for troll gear and October 21 for net gear.

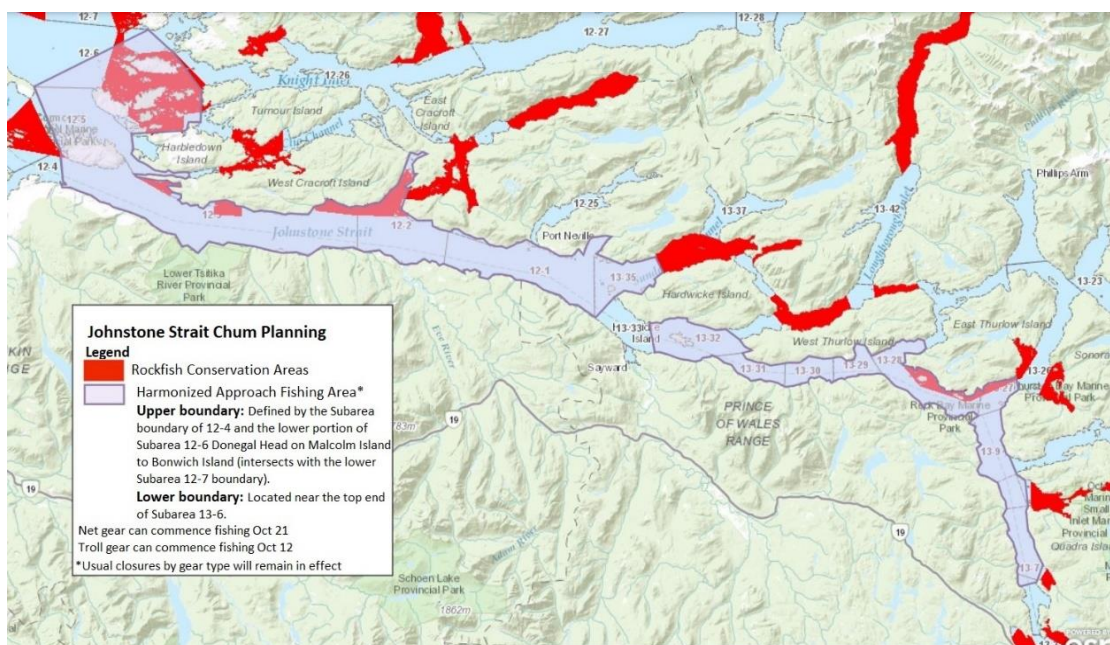


Figure 13–9: Map of the harmonized fishing area in portions of Areas 12 and 13.

Table 13–21: Overview of troll and net Interior Fraser River Steelhead rolling window closure dates and the harmonized window closure dates in the Johnstone Strait mixed-stock areas.

	27-day troll window closure		42-day net window closure	
	Start	End	Start	End
Area 13	17-Sep	13-Oct	11-Sep	22-Oct
Area 12	12-Sep	8-Oct	6-Sep	17-Oct
Area 11	11-Sep	7-Oct	5-Sep	16-Oct
Area 111	10-Sep	6-Oct	4-Sep	15-Oct
Area 12/13	15-Sep	11-Oct	9-Sep	20-Oct
Harmonized				

Inside Southern Chum - Mixed-Stock Demonstration Fisheries

Area H Troll Johnstone Strait Chum Individual Transferable Effort (ITE) Demonstration Fishery

Region: South Coast

Participants: All Area H Troll licence holders

Location of Fishery: Johnstone Strait (portions of Areas 12 and 13).

This fishery will be subject to the 27-day rolling window closure to be implemented in 2026 to protect co-migrating IFR Steelhead.

Gear Type: Troll; barbless hooks and revival tanks are mandatory

Time Frame of Fishery: Fishing plans and start dates will be confirmed prior to the season through the Chum Working Group consultation process.

Allocation: Boat day allocations are based on the anticipated amount of effort and the distribution of that effort in order to stay within the Area H share of the harvest rate. The target species is Chum; retention of Pink is permitted. There will be non-retention of Sockeye, Coho, Chinook, and Steelhead.

Monitoring Plan: Start, end, pause and daily catch reports will be required by phone-in or electronic logbook. Overflights may be conducted and both C&P and charter patrol will monitor the fishery.

Mixed-Stock First Nations Commercial Chum Harvest

There are no First Nations commercial fisheries for mixed-stock Chum.

13.2.3.5.4 Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirement Fisheries

ESSR fisheries are identified in the Fraser and ECVI/Mainland Chum sections.

13.2.4 FRASER CHUM

13.2.4.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

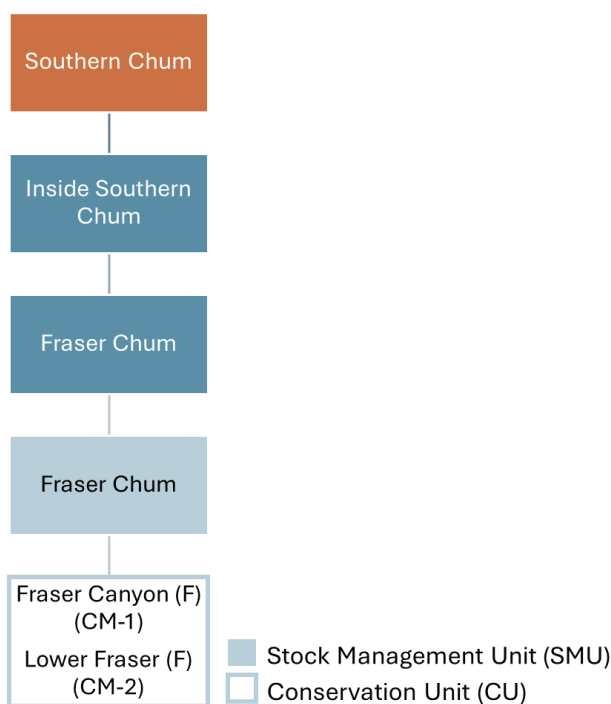


Figure 13–10: Overview of Fraser Chum

The Fraser Chum Management Unit includes all Chum that return to spawn in the Fraser River mainstem and Fraser River tributaries and is comprised of the WSP Lower Fraser Chum Conservation Unit (CU) and the Fraser Canyon Chum CU. The vast majority of Chum returning to the Fraser River are part of the Lower Fraser Chum CU, and spawn in the mainstem and tributaries of the Fraser River downstream of Hope. Major spawning aggregations occur within the Harrison River (including Weaver Creek and Chehalis River), the Stave River and the Chilliwack River. No spawning locations have been identified upstream of Hell’s Gate. Chum Salmon return to the Fraser River from September through December, with the typical peak of migration through the lower river occurring from mid- to late October.

Chum-directed fisheries that harvest Fraser Chum include mixed-stock fisheries in Johnstone Strait, mixed-stock fisheries in the U.S. Strait of Juan de Fuca and San Juan Islands, and Fraser Chum-targeted fisheries occurring within the Fraser River.

Fraser Chum are assessed in-season using Albion test fishery data to estimate Chum abundance, migration timing, and other biological information. Escapement estimates provided post-season rely on visual surveys of some systems, as well as mark-recapture estimates in the Harrison River and Chilliwack River. Coverage of visual surveys has declined since the 1980s in

terms of the number of surveyed systems, but the remaining surveys still cover most of the key production areas for Fraser Chum.

DFO hatchery programs in the Lower Fraser River produce Chum to supplement harvest (Chehalis River, Chilliwack River, Inch Creek, and Weaver Creek), but hatchery production is also used for population rebuilding, such as helping to establish spawning populations in areas that have benefitted from habitat improvement projects. Chum are also produced at smaller-scale community-run hatcheries for educational and stewardship purposes.

13.2.4.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.2.4.2.1 Pre-season

Formal quantitative forecasts are not prepared for Fraser River Chum, but the qualitative Salmon Outlook for 2026 is “below average”. Returns in 2026 will be based largely on the brood from the 2022 escapement; assessed escapement in 2022 was estimated at approximately 1,135,000 spawners. While the 2022 escapement was “at-or-above-average”, the 2026 outlook is considered “below average” due to poor escapements in 2021 and 2023, and an observed long-term decline in productivity. In 2025, the Lower Fraser Chum CU (which dominates the Fraser Chum Salmon SMU) was assigned a WSP Rapid Status Assessment of RED.

The preliminary estimate for the 2025 Fraser River Chum spawning escapement is 830,000 fish. This estimate includes both hatchery and wild spawners and is higher than the 2021 primary brood year escapement (530,000 fish) and close to the escapement target of 800,000 wild spawners.

13.2.4.2.2 In-season

Terminal abundance of Fraser River Chum Salmon is estimated based on in-season information on Chum catch from the Albion Chum test fishery and a Bayesian model that incorporates prior information on terminal run size and migration timing.

The Albion Chum test fishery has operated annually since 1979 on the lower Fraser River in Area 29 at Albion (near Fort Langley). The test fishery is conducted with a drifted gill net at a specific site near the old Albion ferry crossing. On each day of operation, the boat fishes two sets, timed to coincide with the daily high tide. The Albion Chum test fishery normally fishes every other day from September 1 through October 20, alternating days with the Albion Chinook test fishery (which fishes an 8” mesh gill net during this period). From October 15 through early November, the Chum Salmon test fishery operates daily, then every other day until mid-November. Note that for 2026, the end date of the test fishery has been adjusted

slightly (from November 23 to November 13) to reduce costs. The gill net used in the Albion Chum test fishery is 150 fathoms long, constructed from uniform 6.75" mesh.

The first in-season estimate of terminal Fraser River Chum Salmon abundance is typically provided in mid-October. Decisions regarding fishing opportunities are based on the Albion test fishery in-season information.

Table 13–22: Planned Chum Test Fisheries

Test Fishery	Proposed Proponent	Test Fishery Purpose	Potential Dates (preliminary ^a)	
			Start	End
Albion Gill Net	DFO	Fraser Chum abundance and biological information	01-Sep	13-Nov

^a All dates subject to change based on in-season factors.

13.2.4.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The current Interior Fraser River (IFR) Steelhead window closure overlaps with the majority of the Fraser Chum return; therefore, when FSC openings are being contemplated, or later if commercial and recreational openings are being planned, approximately one third to one quarter of the terminal Fraser Chum run size will likely be accessible to these fisheries, respectively. Potential long-term consequences of fishing pressure on the tail end of the run that should be considered include: a shift to earlier peak timing of the entire return; shorter overall duration of the return; and, loss of genetic diversity and capacity to withstand environmental change.

To minimize the above concerns in 2026, the Department will continue to implement decision rules for Fraser River Chum fisheries to consider the delayed start of fisheries caused by the Interior Fraser River Steelhead window closure.

Specifically, for all commercial gill net fisheries (including EO/Demo fisheries), only a portion of the TAC will be released. The proportion of the TAC released will be based on the expected terminal return remaining available to fisheries after the IFR Steelhead window closure ends. Using average run timing information, the amount of TAC that would be released ranges from approximately 22% to 34% of the full amount and varies by area due to the offset timing of the IFR Steelhead window closure by area. In-season information on return timing will be used

when estimating the terminal return remaining available to fisheries. This change will not affect TAC for commercial fisheries using selective gear (purse seine, beach seine, shallow seine) or FSC allocations.

In addition, the fishery end dates for all FSC, commercial, and recreational fisheries that were introduced in 2022 will be implemented in 2026 for Fraser River mainstem fisheries. The intent of this measure is to ensure fisheries are only occurring when and where salmon are present. Based on the average run timing at the Albion test fishery and spawning grounds, there will be no fishing for salmon in the Fraser River mainstem after November 30. This end date may be revised if in-season information suggests the return timing differs significantly from average. In tributaries with Chinook and Coho-directed recreational opportunities, there will be no fishing for Chum Salmon from December 1 to 31. FSC opportunities (including targeting Chum Salmon) will continue to be provided in tributaries until December 31 for those First Nations with access to terminal areas.

Conservation measures that were implemented since 2019 to reduce the impact of Fraser River Chum fisheries on co-migrating Interior Fraser River Steelhead are planned to continue in 2026. These actions are described generally in Section 13.2.4.4 and detailed measures are provided for specific fisheries contained in Section 13.2.4.5.1.

Management of Fraser River Chum fisheries is based upon in-season information. As described in detail in the previous section, Albion test fishing data will be used to identify the abundance of Chum Salmon returning to the Fraser River. The first in-season terminal run size assessment is announced in mid-October once the peak of the return has been identified.

The in-season estimate of abundance for Fraser River Chum is used for international and domestic management, as outlined in Chapter 6 of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST). The PST stipulates that if Fraser River Chum in-season abundance (terminal run size) is estimated to be less than 900,000, the Canadian commercial Chum Salmon fisheries within the Fraser River and in associated marine areas (Area 29) will be suspended. Domestic management, however, stipulates the terminal run size required to initiate these fisheries is 916,000. In U.S. Areas 7 and 7A, catch is restricted to different levels depending on how the Fraser River Chum terminal run size estimate relates to the benchmarks of 1,050,000 or 1,600,000.

Current decision points and management actions for domestic management of Fraser River Chum Salmon are outlined in Table 13–23. These decisions points are linked to the in-season terminal run size estimate and relate to key amounts supporting specific conservation and harvest levels:

500,000: Habitat-based escapement goal (Palmer 1972⁶); minimum escapement level, below which is considered a conservation concern for Fraser River Chum Salmon.

800,000: The aggregate escapement goal for Fraser River Chum Salmon is 800,000 spawners. This objective is based on a stock-recruit analysis (Ryall et al. 1999⁷) that estimated the number of spawners required to maximize recruits per spawner (S_{MSY}).

916,000: Minimum terminal run size needed to meet the escapement goal (800,000) and provide full FSC and Treaty allocations (72,000), test fishery catch (9,000), and a minimum 35,000 TAC to support a commercial fishery.

1,050,000: Derived from old Clockwork management strategy, where a minimum run size of 550,000 for the early Chum run and 500,000 for the late Chum run was required to enable a 15% commercial TAC. Note that evidence for different run timings of Fraser Chum stocks has not been observed since approximately 2003, so Fraser Chum are managed as an aggregate with one run timing.

Implementation of the WSP will require developing of biological benchmarks and associated biological status zones for Fraser River Chum. When these benchmarks are identified, corresponding decision breakpoints and management actions may be reviewed. Analyses have not yet been initiated on benchmark identification for Fraser River Chum.

⁶ Palmer, R.N. (1972) Fraser River chum salmon. Dept. Env. Fish. Ser. Pacific Region Tech. Rep. No. 1972-1: 284p.

⁷ Ryall, P. Murray, C., Palermo, V., Bailey, D., and Chen, D. (1999) Status of Clockwork Chum Salmon Stock and Review of the Clockwork Management Strategy. CSAS Res. Doc. 99/169: 134 p.

Table 13–23: Summary of key decision points for the management of the Fraser River Chum fishery

Fraser River Terminal Run Size	Harvest Plan	Lower Fraser First Nations	Commercial	Recreational
<500,000	Reduced directed harvest of Chum Salmon, FSC and test fisheries only. Harvest rate not to exceed 10% of the terminal run size for Fraser Chum.	Reduced allocation and limited fisheries (reduced hours and days/week fishing)	Closed	Mainstem Fraser River and tributaries closed to fishing for Chum Salmon.
500,000 to 800,000	Directed harvest of Chum Salmon limited to FSC and test fisheries. Catch not to exceed 91,800 (82,800 First Nations ¹ and 9,000 test fishing).	Full allocation	Closed	Mainstem Fraser River closed to fishing for Chum Salmon. Non-retention of Chum Salmon in tributaries.

Fraser River Terminal Run Size	Harvest Plan	Lower Fraser First Nations	Commercial	Recreational
800,000 to 916,000	Directed harvest of Chum Salmon limited to FSC, test fisheries, and reduced recreational fisheries. Catch not to exceed 91,800 (82,800 First Nations ¹ and 9,000 test fishing).	Full allocation	Closed	Mainstem Fraser River and tributaries open to retention of Chum Salmon. Consider reduced daily Chum retention limits.
916,000 to 1,050,000	Directed harvest of Chum Salmon. Commercial catch not to exceed 10% of the terminal run size for Fraser Chum.	Full allocation	Open ² (TAC 35,000-105,000)	Mainstem Fraser River and tributaries open to retention of Chum Salmon, subject to regular daily limits.
>1,050,000	Directed harvest of Chum Salmon. Commercial catch not to exceed 15% of the terminal run size for Fraser Chum.	Full allocation	Open ² (minimum TAC 105,001)	Mainstem Fraser River and tributaries open to retention of Chum Salmon, subject to regular daily limits.

¹ Tsawwassen and Tla'amin Treaty domestic fishery allocations are not included here.

² Fraser Chum commercial gillnet fisheries (including EO) are part of the longer-term closures implemented in 2022 and as such, commercial TAC will not be released. See Appendix 6: Longer-Term Commercial Closures or Mitigation for more details on the closures.

Commercial fishing opportunities (including First Nations Economic Opportunities) are contingent upon the identification of a commercial TAC:

- 1 At terminal run sizes less than 916,000, no commercial TAC is available.
- 2 At terminal run sizes from 916,000 to 1,050,000, the commercial TAC is a maximum of 10% of the terminal run size. A minimum commercial TAC of 35,000 Chum has been identified as a requirement to support Area E gill net fishery openings.
- 3 At terminal run sizes greater than 1,050,000, the commercial TAC is a maximum of 15% of the terminal run size.

The Department intends to work with participants in the Fraser commercial Chum fisheries, including First Nations, to outline considerations that will guide planning and scheduling of in-season commercial fishery openings.

Specific details of the fisheries and target allocations will be determined as part of the in-season planning process. The involvement of the Area B seine fleet in the Fraser River Chum fishery is dependent on the Area B Seine Harvest Committee developing and implementing a limited participation fishing plan that limits the harvests of Chum to identified target allocations.

The recreational fishery within the Fraser River was historically open from mid-July or early August to December 31 annually. For 2026, the Fraser mainstem and tributaries will remain closed to fishing for Chum Salmon until the preliminary in-season terminal run size estimate of Fraser Chum Salmon is available in mid- to late October. Management actions will then be determined according to the guidelines below (and subject to aforementioned end dates):

- At terminal run sizes below 500,000 the recreational fishery on the Fraser mainstem and tributaries will be closed to fishing for Chum Salmon.
- At terminal run sizes below 800,000 the recreational fishery on the Fraser mainstem will remain closed and openings on tributaries targeting other species will continue with non-retention of Chum Salmon.
- At terminal run sizes from 800,000 to 916,000 the recreational fishery will open on the Fraser River mainstem. Retention opportunities on tributaries would be limited to those where a surplus of hatchery-produced Chum Salmon is likely to occur. A surplus may be identified if and when the hatchery facility determines broodstock requirements are likely to be met. Daily limits of Chum Salmon on the Fraser mainstem and in tributaries will be reduced.
- At terminal run sizes greater than 916,000, the recreational fishery will open in the Fraser River mainstem and tributaries, subject to regular daily limits.

Continuing for 2026-27: The preliminary in-season run size estimate (rather than solely the final in-season estimate) may be considered to open Fraser River tributaries to non-retention if the modelled estimate suggests the run size is very unlikely (0-10% probability) to be less than 500,000.

For 2026, management of the recreational fishery will also be subject to management measures implemented to conserve IFR Steelhead. Please note general information on IFR Steelhead management measures in Section 13.2.4.4 and 13.2.4.5.2.

First Nations FSC fisheries typically occur in October and November, but these opportunities will be subject to management measures implemented to conserve IFR Steelhead. Please note general information on IFR Steelhead management measures in Section 13.2.4.4 and 13.2.4.5.1. If in-season information indicates that the Fraser Chum return is less than 500,000, fisheries targeting Fraser Chum will be limited to a maximum harvest rate of 10% or lower (includes FSC and test fisheries only).

13.2.4.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO FRASER CHUM FISHERIES

Chum fisheries within the Fraser River will be managed to minimize bycatch of co-migrating stocks of concern, including Lower Fraser River Coho, Interior Fraser River (IFR) Coho, and IFR Steelhead. In some cases, full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

For Chum-directed fisheries within the Fraser River, a “window closure” has been the primary tool applied in First Nations, commercial, and recreational fisheries to protect IFR Coho from non-selective fishing gear (e.g., gill nets, rod and reel fishing with bait). Selective fishing gear (e.g., beach seines, rod and reel fishing with no bait, dip nets) has been allowed to fish within these window closure dates, which span the period from early September to mid-October in the Lower Fraser River. Additional details on IFR Coho management are outlined in Section 13.3.

Given ongoing declines in IFR Steelhead escapement and the designation of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as Endangered by COSEWIC, DFO is continuing with a comprehensive, precautionary approach to the management of all fisheries in Southern BC that are likely to impact this stock of concern. Within the Fraser River (including sub-Areas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10), a 42-day closure will apply to commercial gill net, purse seine, beach seine, and shallow seine fisheries (including EO fisheries) and a 27-day closure will apply to commercial troll fisheries. Further, a 42-day closure will apply to Fraser River recreational fisheries and a 27-day closure will apply to Fraser River FSC fisheries. Areas and dates for the window closure are identified in [Appendix 7](#).

Following the window closure, set gill net gear will be further restricted to operate during daylight hours only, while attended by a harvester at all times.

In addition to the window closure, established approaches to reduce Steelhead encounters and minimize IFR Steelhead mortality will continue. For Area E Chum fisheries, this includes using shorter nets and reducing soak times—practices which have been in place since 2002. The use of revival tanks is also mandatory for commercial fisheries.

The Department continues to have an interest in finding additional ways to further reduce incidental impacts of salmon fisheries on IFR Steelhead. Discussions concerning modifications to gear or fishing methods in order to achieve such reductions are ongoing and may result in additional conservation measures in the 2026 season.

13.2.4.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.2.4.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food, Social and Ceremonial Fisheries

FSC fisheries for Fraser Chum are culturally significant for First Nations communities in the lower Fraser River. Current communal licence harvest targets for these communities total 91,800 Fraser Chum.

Refer to Section 10.2 for Table 10–1 Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts for Southern BC/Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

At terminal run sizes below 500,000 Chum, FSC fishing opportunities may be reduced and a maximum harvest rate of 10% (including FSC and test fisheries only) will be implemented. For planning purposes, returns less than 500,000 will be considered to be a conservation concern. This value may be revised in the future based on subsequent analyses.

Typically, Fraser River First Nations are provided FSC fishing opportunities for Chum as the Interior Fraser River Coho window closure ends in each area, beginning in early October. Starting in 2019, an additional closure period was implemented to protect IFR Steelhead (in [Appendix 7](#)). Continuing in 2026, Chum-directed FSC fisheries will be initiated following the end of the IFR Steelhead closure in each area. Area staff will work with local First Nations communities to develop specific fishing plans that meet these conservation objectives.

DFO is working with the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) Nation to implement the BC Supreme Court's declaration of an Aboriginal right to fish for food in the south arm of the Fraser River.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

In the lower Fraser River, catch monitoring programs are managed through Activity Funding or Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements. Monitoring programs implemented vary between Nations but typically include landing site or vessel-based collection of catch and effort information paired with validation of effort by vessel patrols or overflights. Specific focus has also been placed on sampling bycatch of Chinook and Coho Salmon for mark rate information and coded-wire tags (CWTs) to support the Salmon Head Recovery Program. Catch reports are received by DFO from catch monitoring programs on a weekly basis, within 48 hours of a fishery closing.

Treaty Fisheries

Tsawwassen First Nation Fisheries (Domestic)

In 2026, a 27-day rolling window closure will be in place to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead that will impact Treaty fisheries in the Fraser River, as per areas and dates outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

Area staff will work with the Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) to develop specific fishing plans that meet these conservation objectives.

As per the Tsawwassen First Nation Fisheries Operation Guidelines (TFN FOG), each year the TFN will develop a Tsawwassen Annual Fishing Plan (TFN AFP) for the harvest of salmon as per the Tsawwassen First Nations Final Agreement (TFN FA). The TFN AFP will include the TFN preference for stocks and species to be harvested, locations, timing, access to specific runs, method of harvest, catch monitoring and reporting, enforcement, etc. The TFN AFP is then presented to the Joint Fisheries Committee (JFC) for their review. The JFC is made up of representatives of Canada (DFO), the Province of BC and the Tsawwassen First Nation. The JFC considers the TFN AFP in making its recommendations to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans about the issuance of Harvest Document(s), which in effect licence the fishing of FSC salmon during the season. Multiple harvest documents will be issued over the course of a season for each salmon species. Harvest Documents may include: species and quantity, use of fish, gear type, dates and times, area, designations, monitoring and reporting, etc.

The domestic allocation for Chum Salmon under the TFN FA will be 2.58% of the Terminal Surplus of Fraser River Chum Salmon to a maximum of 2,576 Fraser River Chum Salmon.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

The monitoring program for TFN Domestic fisheries includes fisher logs supplemented by validations of catch through on-water patrols and/or observations of landings and effort

through on-water patrols. Details of monitoring programs in place can be found in the TFN FOG.

13.2.4.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

Chum retention in the Fraser River mainstem is subject to co-migrating salmon stocks and species of concern. In the tidal portion of the Fraser River (Area 29 downstream of the CPR bridge at Mission), the full daily limit is 4 Chum. In non-tidal portions of the Fraser River (Region 2, from Mission to the Hope Bridge), the full daily limit is 2 Chum. The fishery does not occur upstream of the Hope Bridge in order to reduce impacts on Fraser Canyon Chum. Daily limits may be adjusted depending on in-season abundance estimates.

Continuing in 2026: Recreational fisheries in the Fraser River mainstem are subject to fishery end dates (see Section 13.2.5.3). Given the relatively poor outlook for Fraser Chum Salmon, all recreational fisheries targeting Chum Salmon in the Lower Fraser River and tributaries remain closed until the in-season run size estimate is available. Recreational fishery openings directed on Fraser Chum will depend on the in-season abundance estimate and associated key decision points for management outlined in Section 13.2.4.3. The preliminary in-season run size estimate (rather than solely the final in-season estimate) may be considered to open Fraser River tributaries to non-retention if the modelled estimate suggests the run size is very unlikely (0-10% probability) to be less than 500,000.

In the tidal waters of the Fraser River and as in recent years, the non-tidal waters downstream of Hope in Region 2, opportunities for hatchery-marked Coho may be provided after the IFR Steelhead closure. The start date of this opportunity will be the day immediately following the IFR Steelhead closure when there is a high probability (>90%) that the terminal run size for Fraser Chum will exceed 500,000, based on the in-season estimate. A bait ban will be in place.

As part of the IFR Steelhead conservation measures continuing in 2026, a 42-day rolling window closure will be applied to recreational fisheries in the Fraser River mainstem (including sub-Areas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10). No fishing for salmon will be permitted in the areas and dates outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

Continuing in 2026: Due to concerns regarding the impacts of non-compliance activities on non-target stocks and species, including stocks of concern, within portions of the Chilliwack/Vedder River in recent years, the Department will consider implementing in-season area-time closures within this river system to offer protection to co-migrating Sockeye Salmon.

Fishery openings are published on the recreational fisheries website, <http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca/>. Updates are provided in-season via fishery notices.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Creel surveys are conducted in portions of the lower Fraser River and select tributaries to estimate recreational catch and effort for the times and areas surveyed. Typically, the creel survey in the lower Fraser River mainstem begins when the mainstem is opened to recreational salmon fishing; however, over the last number of years, the survey end date has been variable (mid-September to end of November). The creel surveys conducted on the Chilliwack River and Nicomen-Norrish recreational fisheries have remained stable over the last number of years both in times and areas (Chilliwack is surveyed from mid-September to mid-November and Nicomen-Norrish is surveyed from early October to the end of November).

13.2.4.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

The commercial licence groups that can access Fraser Chum in the terminal area (i.e., Area 29) are Area E, Area H and Area B. Additionally, Fraser Chum are harvested in mixed-stock fisheries in Johnstone Strait by a number of commercial licence groups (see Johnstone Strait Mixed Stock Chum Section 13.2.2). Other commercial opportunities to harvest Fraser Chum include Economic Opportunity fisheries for First Nations in the Lower Fraser River and demonstration fisheries for First Nations and commercial licence groups.

Allocation

The following table describes the overall allocation for all Inside Southern Chum, which includes Fraser Chum. These allocations are used to balance overall harvest amounts in the Johnstone Strait mixed-stock, East Coast Vancouver Island and mainland, and Fraser River commercial fisheries.

Table 13–24: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
Inside Southern Chum	11 to 19, 28 to 29	63.0%	19.2%	12.0%	0.0%	5.8%

Fraser Commercial Chum Fisheries

Area E Gill Net (Area 29)

Area E gill net fishery is closed to protect stocks of conservation concern. This closure is expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer term fishery closures.

Area B Seine (Area 29)

Seine fishing opportunities for Chum Salmon will be confirmed in-season, based upon in-season assessment of the abundance of the Chum Salmon returns and management objectives for IFR Steelhead (see Section 6.9).

As part of the IFR Steelhead conservation measures continuing in 2026, a 42-day rolling window closure will be applied to the Fraser River commercial seine Chum fisheries. No commercial seine Chum fisheries will be permitted within the IFR Steelhead window closure in Area 29 within the areas and dates outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

A review of the Interior Fraser River Steelhead Window Closure boundary in portions of Area 29 was conducted in 2025 to look at harmonizing sub-areas in Area 29 in order to maintain fishing opportunity in Area 29 while aligning with the intent of the IFR Steelhead rolling window closure. This approach would also simplify management of the fishery in the terminal fishing area. Fleets managed according to the 27-day and 42-day window closures will be provided the opportunity pre-season to choose if they would like to follow the harmonized approach, or follow the dates and areas identified in [Appendix 7](#). The harmonized approach overall provides additional protection to IFR Steelhead. If a group chooses to fish the harmonized approach for a fishery on the front end of the harmonized window closure, then the window closure will also apply on the latter end of other fisheries (i.e., Fraser Sockeye/Pink fisheries at the start of the window closure, and Fraser Chum fisheries at the end of the window closure).

Area 29 Harmonized Window Closure

The harmonized window closure is a combined fishing area comprised of PFMA 29-3, 29-4, 29-6 and portions of 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10 (Figure 13–11). The purpose of the harmonized window closure is to maintain fishing opportunity in the Strait of Georgia while aligning with the intent of the IFR Steelhead rolling window closure. Fraser Sockeye fishing opportunities within the harmonized fishing area would end September 23 for troll gear and September 16 for net gear while Fraser Chum fishing opportunities within the harmonized area would commence October 21 for troll gear and October 29 for net gear (Table 13–25). No fishing opportunities would occur from September 24 to October 20 for troll gear and from September 17 to October 28 for net gear.

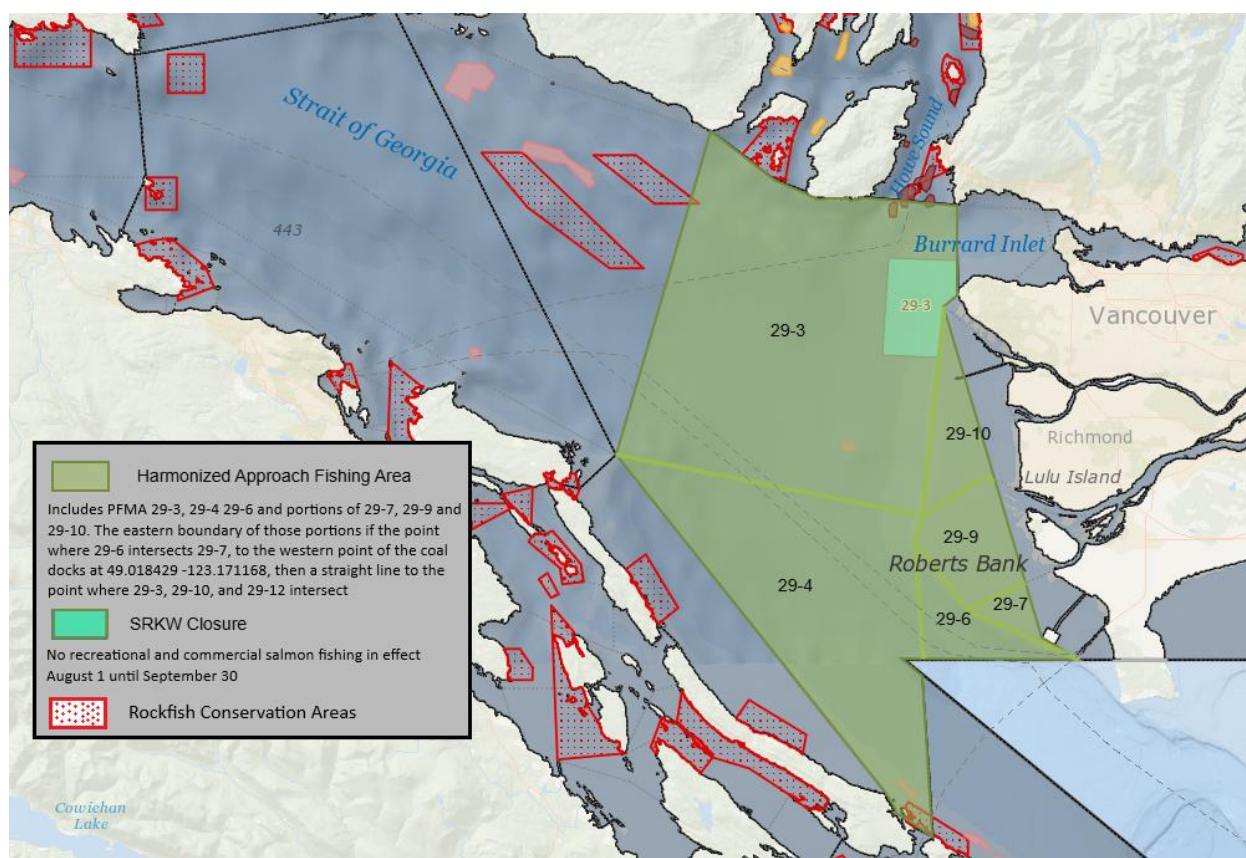


Figure 13–11: Map of the harmonized fishing area in PFMA 29-3, 29-4, 29-6 and portions of 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10

Table 13–25: Overview of the original troll and net IFR Steelhead rolling window closure dates and the harmonized window closure dates for portions of PFMA 29

		27-day (troll gear) window closure		42-day (net gear) window closure	
		Start	End	Start	End
Original	Area 29-1 to 29-5	Sep 23	Oct 19	Sep 16	Oct 27
	Area 29-6, 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10	Sep 26	Oct 22	Sep 19	Oct 30
Harmonized Area	Area 29 Harmonized Area	Sep 24	Oct 20	Sep 17	Oct 28

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic

disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.2.

Area H Troll (Area 29)

A 27-day rolling window closure will be applied to commercial troll fisheries as part of the 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures. No commercial troll fisheries will be permitted within the window closure in Area 29 within the areas and dates outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

A review of the Interior Fraser River Steelhead Window Closure boundary in portions of Area 29 was conducted in 2025 to look at harmonizing sub-areas in Area 29 in order to streamline fishery management in Area 29 while continuing to protect IFR Steelhead. This approach would also simplify management of the fishery in the terminal fishing area. Fleets managed according to the 27-day and 42-day window closures will be provided the opportunity pre-season to choose if they would like to follow the harmonized approach, or follow the dates and areas identified in [Appendix 7](#). This harmonized approach provides additional protection to IFR Steelhead. If a group chooses to fish the harmonized approach for a fishery on the front end of the harmonized window closure, then the window closure will also apply on the latter end of other fisheries (i.e., Fraser Sockeye/Pink fisheries at the start of the window closure, and Fraser Chum fisheries at the end of the window closure).

Area 29 Harmonized Window Closure

The harmonized window closure is a combined fishing area comprised of PFMAs 29-3, 29-4, 29-6 and portions of 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10 (Figure 13–11). The purpose of the harmonized window closure is to maintain fishing opportunity in the Strait of Georgia while aligning with the intent of the IFR Steelhead rolling window closure. Fishing opportunities within the harmonized fishing area would commence September 17 for troll gear and September 24 for net gear (Table 13–25).

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.2.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting includes the following:

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest log or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log) is required in all commercial

fisheries. (Catch Reporting requirements specific to each licence group are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type).

- Vessel counts conducted to verify number of vessels (effort) in each Area E gill net opening.
- Roving on-water observer coverage (DFO catch monitoring coverage and charter patrols) in each Area E gill net opening to conduct net haul observations and gather independent information on encounters of non-target species.
- Partial independent on-board/at-sea observer coverage for Area B seine fisheries.
- Dockside validation for Area B seine fisheries.

Demonstration Fisheries

Area B Seine Area 29 Chum Fishery

The Area B Harvest Committee has expressed an interest in continuing to explore an Area 29 directed Chum seine fishery similar to that of 2015.

Region: South Coast

Participants: All Area B licence holders (coordinated by ABHC/Area B Seine Society)

Location of Fishery: The fishing areas that may be considered are portions of Area 29 off the Fraser River mouth.

For 2026 this fishery is to be operated in times and areas outside of the rolling window closure identified to protect IFR Steelhead.

Gear Type: Seine gear using both regular seine and shallow seine nets, and the use of power skiffs is permitted. Selective fishing measures are mandatory; specified by licence conditions.

Time Frame: The fishery would occur after the IFR Steelhead window closure in November

Allocation: Fishing opportunities will be based on catch levels in relation to the overall allocation of Inside Southern Chum

The target species is Chum, retention of Pink is permitted. There will be non-retention of Sockeye, Coho, Chinook and Steelhead.

Monitoring Plan: Start, end, pause and daily catch reports will be required by phone-in or electronic logbook. There will be a requirement for observer coverage on vessels participating in this fishery. In addition to monitoring catch, observers will be available to collect any DNA sampling that is required and identified.

Area B Seine Fraser River Chum Demonstration Fishery in the Lower Fraser River

The purpose of this experimental fishery project is firstly to demonstrate the effectiveness of harvesting Fraser River Chum Salmon within the confines of the Fraser River employing the selective capabilities of a purse seine, and secondly to continue the harvest of Chum Salmon that may not be available in marine areas, due to other constraints.

Region: Lower Fraser River Area – Fraser River mainstem

Participants: All Area B licence holders will be eligible; however, as this is an experiment, effort controls will be in place to limit participation to a maximum of eight to ten vessels fishing on any given day

Location of Fishery: Area 29 in-river; Area B has indicated there are a number of potential locations around New Westminster, Glenrose, the Cement Plant, and down to the Deas Tunnel that would be suitable for seining and out of the shipping lanes

This fishery is to be operated in times and areas outside of the rolling window closure identified to protect IFR Steelhead.

Gear Type: Seine gear using shallow seine nets, the use of power skiffs and selective fishing measures are mandatory and are specified by licence conditions

Time Frame: The fishery would occur between mid-October and early November.

Consideration of other fisheries in the area will be taken into account when planning Area B in-river fishing activities. Specific fishing times would be confirmed in-season through an integrated planning process. The amount of available fishing days for this experiment will be confirmed in-season.

Allocation: Fishing opportunities will be based on catch levels in relation to the overall allocation of Inside Southern Chum.

The target species is Chum, retention of Pink is permitted. There will be non-retention of Sockeye, Coho, Chinook and Steelhead.

Monitoring Plan: Start, end, pause and set-by-set catch reports will be required by phone-in or electronic logbook. There will be a requirement for observer coverage on all vessels participating in this fishery. In addition to monitoring catch, observers will collect any biological samples (including DNA samples) that are required and identified.

13.2.4.5.4 Fraser First Nations Commercial Chum Harvest

Demonstration Fisheries

2026 Harrison-Fraser River Demonstration Fishery

Region: Lower Fraser Area

Participants: Sts'ailes and Scowlitz First Nations

Location of Fishery: The waters of the Harrison River located between the outlet of Harrison Lake downstream to the orange boundary signs labelled 'Fishing Boundary HFA' approximately 1,000 meters below the CN Railway Bridge; and

the waters of the Fraser River bounded on the west by a line from a white boundary sign on the upstream side of the Fraser River at the mouth of the Sumas River, thence true north to a white boundary sign on the opposite shore and bounded on the east by the downstream side of the bridge across the Fraser River at Agassiz.

For 2026, this fishery is to be operated in times and areas outside of the rolling window closure identified to protect IFR Steelhead.

Gear Type: Chum: Beach seines only. Beach seines not to exceed a maximum mesh size of 2 ¾ inches and a length of 50 fathoms or 360 feet.

Allocation:

- a. Chum: To be determined but will be expressed as a percentage (%) share of the Fraser River Terminal Commercial Total Allowable Catch (FRTCTAC) utilizing relinquished licences from the PICFI program.
- b. Fraser Chinook: Fraser Chinook bycatch retention may be permitted subject to abundance.
- c. Hatchery Marked Coho: Hatchery-marked Coho bycatch retention may be permitted subject to abundance.

Time Frame: All fishery time frames are estimates and final dates will be determined according to in-season migration timing information.

- Chum: Mid–October to mid-November

Monitoring Plan: During any beach seining activity, a Monitor must be present with every beach seining crew during all fishing activity and provide set-by-set updates to the Sts'ailes Fishery Manager before the beach seine crews deploy their next set to ensure there is TAC available. The Sts'ailes Fishing Authority will collect

all catch statistics via these monitors and report this information to DFO within 24 hours after the fishery closes.

Harvest Agreement Fisheries

Continuing in 2026, the TFN Harvest Agreement fishery (using gill net gear) will be closed to protect stocks of conservation concern. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. Use of other selective gear types may be permitted. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer term fishery closures.

Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) Fisheries (Commercial)

In addition to the allocation of salmon for domestic harvests, TFN have an allocation for commercial catch outside of the Treaty as identified via the Tsawwassen First Nations Harvest Agreement (TFN HA). The allocation in the TFN HA does not affirm Aboriginal or Treaty rights. Fishing undertaken via the TFN HA will be comparable to the requirements of the current Fraser River commercial fishery (First Nations economic opportunity (EO) fishery), or a general commercial fishery (e.g., Area E). For 2026, this means that this fishery will not operate within the period identified for the IFR Steelhead window closures for gill net, purse seine, beach seine, and shallow seine gear (see [Appendix 7](#) for dates). TFN fishers will be expected to operate under the same rules that apply to other fishers taking part in that Fraser River commercial fishery. TFN also prepares an Annual Fishing Plan for review by the JFC approval prior to the season's commencement. Each year that the Minister authorizes a Fraser River commercial fishery in the TFN's fishing area, or a general commercial fishery, the Minister will issue a communal commercial harvest document for the TFN. The TFN will draft an Annual Report for approval by the JFC. TFN commercial Chum Salmon allocation under the TFN HA:

3.27% of the Terminal Commercial Catch for Fraser River Chum Salmon for that year.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

The monitoring program for TFN HA fisheries includes a mandatory landing program (MLP) using 2 to 4 landing sites at which all fishers must land and have their catch validated and is supplemented by effort validation by vessel patrols. If selective gear is used (e.g., purse seines, modified shallow seines, fish trap) monitors are to be present during all fishing activity to record catch information on a set-by-set basis. Catch reports are received by DFO within 24 hours of the fishery close.

Economic Opportunity Fisheries

Continuing in 2026, the EO gill net fishery will be closed to protect stocks of conservation concern. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock

growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. Use of other selective gear types may be permitted. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer term fishery closures.

Negotiations to provide economic opportunities to First Nations in the lower Fraser River are expected to be similar to recent years. Economic opportunity fisheries will be conducted under agreements that specify provisions for planning fisheries, allocations, catch reporting requirements as well as roles and responsibilities regarding the management of the fishery. The Department's general approach is that Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities are managed using the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery and opportunities are only afforded if commercial TAC is available.

Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities may be implemented with different times, areas, gears and regulations consistent with the overall management approach for the commercial fishery, including considerations to protect co-migrating stocks of concern. For 2026, these considerations include the continuation of the 42-day rolling window closure for gill net, purse seine, beach seine, and shallow seine gear to protect IFR Steelhead. No economic opportunity Chum fisheries will be permitted within the IFR Steelhead window closure (see [Appendix 7](#) for dates). In the lower Fraser, DFO will work with First Nations and commercial harvesters to develop an approach to an integrated commercial fishery based on the principles of transparency, accountability and collaboration.

In addition to economic opportunity fisheries, the Department continues to support the development of inland fisheries with First Nations. For 2026, as in previous years, the focus with First Nations will be on experimenting mainly in terminal areas on abundant stocks. These fisheries will be conducted separately from FSC fisheries, under the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery and fish harvested will be off-set with licences that have been voluntarily relinquished from the commercial fishery.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

While details will be finalized prior to fisheries occurring, the monitoring programs in place for 2026 are expected to be similar to recent years as follows:

- Non-selective (e.g., gill net) EO fisheries will be monitored using a mandatory landing program (MLP) with packer and land-based sites where all fishers must land and have their catch validated. This program is supplemented by effort validation by vessel patrols and overflights.
- Selective (e.g., beach seine and purse seine) EO fisheries require monitors to be present during all fishing activity to record catch information on a set-by-set basis.

- Catch reports for these Economic Opportunity fisheries are received by DFO from the catch monitoring programs within 24 hours of the fishery closure.

13.2.4.5.5 ESSR Fisheries

ESSR fisheries may occur at DFO hatchery facilities that have a surplus of returning hatchery Chum. In past years, ESSR fisheries have taken place at:

- Chehalis River Hatchery – Lower Fraser
- Inch Creek Hatchery – Lower Fraser
- Chilliwack River Hatchery – Lower Fraser
- Weaver Creek Spawning Channel – Lower Fraser

13.2.5 INSIDE SOUTHERN CHUM TERMINAL FISHERIES

13.2.5.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT



Figure 13–12: Overview of Inside Southern Chum Terminal

ISC Terminal includes all Chum Salmon spawning in watersheds adjacent to Johnstone Strait and the Strait of Georgia (i.e., Areas 11 to 19), plus Fraser River approach areas (Howe Sound, Burrard Inlet; Area 28), but not the Fraser River mainstem and tributaries. The major ISC terminal systems, grouped by CU and management area, are included in Table 13–26.

- Underlined sites are Summer-timed populations. Remaining populations are Fall-timed.

- Italicized font with an asterisk* marks systems with active hatchery enhancement.

Methods for identifying Conservation Units (CUs) are documented in Holtby and Ciruna (2007). A complete list of sites for each CU is available [here](#).

Table 13–26: Population Structure of the Inside Southern Chum Terminal conservation units

Conservation Unit	Management Area	Spawning Sites
Southern Coastal Streams	Johnstone Strait	Driftwood Creek (Area 11), Waldon Creek (Area 12)
	Kingcome	Bughouse Creek, Charles Creek, Cohoe Creek, Embley Creek, Hauskin Creek, Jennis Bay Creek, Kenneth River, Kingcome River, Mackenzie River, Nimmo Creek, Scott Cove Creek, Shelter Bay Creek, Simoom Sound Creek, Sullivan Bay Creek, Wakeman River
	Bond/Knight	Ahta River, Ahta Valley Creek, Gilford Creek, Hoeya Sound Creek, Kakweiken River, Kamano Bay Creek, Lull Creek, Maple Creek, Matsiu Creek, Mcalister Creek, Shoal Harbour Creek, Viner Sound Creek, Wahkana Bay Creek
Upper Knight	Bond/Knight	Ahnuhati River, Franklin River, Klinaklini River, Kwalate Creek, Sim River
Loughborough	Bond/Knight	Bougey Creek, Call Creek, Cracroft Creek, Glendale Creek, Port Harvey Lagoon Creeks, Protection Point Creek, Shoal Creek
	Johnstone Strait	Fulmore River, Potts Lagoon Creek, Robbers Knob Creek, Tuna River
	Loughborough to Bute	Apple River, Bachus Creek, Cameleon Harbour Creek, Chonat Creek, Elephant Creek, Fanny Bay Creek, Frazer Creek, Frederick Arm Creek, Granite Bay Creek, Grassy Creek, Gray Creek, Hanson's Creek, Hemming Bay Creek, Heydon Creek, Kanish Creek, Knox Bay Creek, Owen Creek, Phillips River, Read Creek, St. Aubyn Creek, Stafford River, Thurston Bay Creek, Village Bay Creek, Waiatt Bay Creek, Willow Creek, Wortley Creek
Northeast Vancouver Island	Upper VI	Cluxewe River, Keogh River, Nahwitti River, <i>Quatse River*</i> , Shushartie River, Songhees Creek, Stranby River, Tsulquate River
	Johnstone Strait	Adam River, Hyde Creek, <i>Kokish River*</i> , Mills Creek, New Vancouver Creek, <i>Nimkish River*</i> , Tsitika River,
		Amor De Cosmos Creek, Hyacinthe Creek, Salmon River

Conservation Unit	Management Area	Spawning Sites
	Mid-VI	Pye Creek
Strait of Georgia	Mid Vancouver Island	Campbell River, Kingfisher Creek, Menzies Creek, Mohun Creek, Quinsam River, Simms Creek
	Loughborough to Bute	Bird Cove Creek, Drew Creek, Open Bay Creek, Quatam River, Whiterock Pass Creek
Bute Inlet	Loughborough to Bute	Cumsack Creek, Homathko River, Orford River, Southgate River, Teaquahan River
Strait of Georgia	Mid Vancouver Island	Bob Creek, Brooklyn Creek, Chef Creek, Cook Creek, Cowie Creek, Hart Creek, Kitty Coleman Creek, McNaughton Creek, Millard Creek, Morrison Creek, <i>Oyster River*</i> , Portuguese Creek, <i>Puntledge River*</i> , <i>Rosewall Creek*</i> , Roy Creek, Sandy Creek, Storie Creek, Trent River, Tsable River, Tsolum River, Waterloo Creek, Wilfred Creek, Woods Creek
		Annie Creek, Englishman River, <i>French Creek*</i> , <i>Little Qualicum River*</i> , Nile Creek, <i>Qualicum River*</i>
	Toba Inlet	Black Lake Creek, Brem River, Brem River Tributary, Filer Creek, Forbes Bay Creek, Forbes Creek, Klite River, Little Toba River, Okeover Creek, Pendrell Sound Creek, Refuge Cove Creek, Store Creek, Tahumming River, Theodosia River, Toba River, Twin Rivers
	Jervis Inlet	<i>Lang Creek*</i> , Lois River, <i>Sliammon Creek*</i> , Whittall Creek
		Albion Creek, Angus Creek, Baker Creek, Brittain River, Burnet Creek, Carlson Creek, Cranby Creek, Deighton Creek, Deserted River, Doriston Creek, Earle Creek, Frock Creek, Gray Creek, Halfmoon Creek, High Creek, Hunaechin Creek, Jefferd Creek, Mill Creek, Mouat Creek, Park Creek, Pender Harbour Creeks, Ruby Creek, Sechelt Creek, Skwawka River, Snake Bay Creek, Storm Creek, Tsuahdi Creek, Tzoonie River, Vancouver River, West Creek
Strait of Georgia (cont.)	Howe Sound / Sunshine Coast	Dakota Creek, McNab Creek, McNair Creek, Potlatch Creek, Rainy River, Twin Creeks,

Conservation Unit	Management Area	Spawning Sites
	Lower Vancouver Island	Beck Creek, Bloods Creek, Bonell Creek, Bonsall Creek, Bush Creek, Chase River, Departure Creek, Haslam Creek, Holland Creek, Knarston Creek, Millstone River, <i>Nanaimo River*</i> , Nanoose Creek, Napoleon Creek, Porter Creek, Stocking Creek, Tyee Creek, Walker Creek
	South Vancouver Island	<i>Chemainus River*</i>
		Cowichan River, Fulford Creek, Koksilah River, Shawnigan Creek
		<i>Goldstream River*</i>
Howe Sound – Burrard Inlet	Jervis Inlet	Bishop Creek, Shannon Creek
	Howe Sound / Sunshine Coast	Wilson Creek
		Avalon Creek, Centre Creek, Eagle Creek, Hutchinson Creek, Langdale Creek, Long Bay Creek, Mannion Creek, Nelson Creek, Ouillet Creek, <i>Terminal Creek*</i> , West Bay Creek, Whispering Creek
	Burrard Inlet	Brothers Creek, <i>Capilano River*</i> , Hastings Creek, Indian River, Lynn Creek, Mackay Creek, Maplewood Creek, McCartney Creek, Mosquito Creek, Mossom Creek, Noons Creek, Richards Creek, Seymour River
Strait of Georgia	Howe Sound / Sunshine Coast	<i>Chapman Creek*</i> , Chaster Creek, Flume Creek, Roberts Creek, Wakefield Creek,
		Ashlu Creek, B.C. Rail Spawning, Branch 100 Creek, Brennan Channel, Brohm River, <i>Cheakamus River*</i> , Chuk-Chuk Creek, Dryden Creek, Fries Creek, Hop Ranch Creek, July Creek, Lower Paradise Channel, Mamquam River, Mashiter Creek, Mashiter Spawning Channel, Meighan Creek, Mission Creek, Moody Channel, Pillchuck Creek, Raffuse Creek, Shovelnose Creek, Spring Creek, Squamish River, Stawamus River, Stawamus Spawning Channel, Tenderfoot Creek, Thirty Seven Mile Creek, Thirty-Six Mile Creek, Tiempo Spawning Channel, Twenty Eight Mile Creek, Upper Paradise Channel, Wildwood Spawning Channel
	Boundary Bay	<i>Serpentine River*</i>

ISC Terminal fry emerge from the gravel as early as February and migrate downstream shortly after emergence, primarily in March and April. The juvenile Chum rear near the estuary and in near-shore areas until approximately late May and subsequently enter the major marine water

bodies (i.e., Strait of Georgia) where they gradually migrate northward through Johnstone Strait. The juvenile migration continues to more offshore waters and towards the Gulf of Alaska beginning in June and July and continues through the summer months. In the first year, Chum are primarily located along the coast of North America and into the Gulf of Alaska (Salo, 1991)⁸.

Return migrations are of considerable distance, and the beginning of return migrations is not well documented. For ISC populations, some Summer Chum are first observed in streams in August (Ahnuhati River) while most of the Fall Chum spawn starting in early October, with the peak of spawning occurring mid- to late October and ending as late as mid-December.

13.2.5.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.2.5.2.1 Pre-season

Table 13–27: Inside Southern Chum Terminal 2026 Salmon Outlook

Management Area	Stock Outlook
Johnstone Strait and Mainland Inlets (Area 11 and 13)	Expectations for Fall Chum in 2026 will likely be below to near average (Outlook Category '2'). This is based on below average parental brood abundances combined with an ongoing period of low Chum productivity. Expect continued variability in Chum returns on a north-south gradient favoring higher survival in southern systems. Small improvements in Summer Chum abundance are likely in 2026, as marine survival appears to have improved but brood year abundance was generally poor across the South Coast.
Areas 14 to 19	Escapement enumeration data for 2025 indicated variable escapements for systems in mid to northern Strait of Georgia and Jervis/Narrows Inlets. For 2026, Mid-Island systems (Puntledge, Little Qualicum, Big Qualicum) are expected to remain well below target levels. Abundance of stocks in the southern Strait of Georgia such as Cowichan and Nanaimo, and Goldstream is uncertain: expectations are for Nanaimo and Goldstream to be near targets and Cowichan to come in below escapement target if low survivals persist. Jervis/Narrows Inlet stocks are forecast to be well below target abundance in 2026.

⁸ Salo, E.O. 1991. Life history of chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*), p. 231-309. In: C. Groot and L. Margolis (Eds.). Pacific Salmon Life Histories. Univ. British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 564 p

13.2.5.2.2 In-season

Refer to Table 13–26, Table 13–28, and Table 13–29 for in-season assessment information. There are no planned Chum test fisheries in ISC terminal areas.

13.2.5.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

13.2.5.3.1 Structure of Harvest Management Decision

Overall, Inside Southern Chum Terminal are managed under a precautionary harvest approach to fisheries management, with a focus on identifying fishing opportunities in terminal areas of Johnstone Strait, Strait of Georgia and Mainland Inlets based on in-season abundance estimates and observed escapements into the natal streams. In terminal fisheries, smaller stocks are protected through time and area closures, and targeted stocks are managed to escapement goals.

The primary management tool is to control fishing effort and catch through restricting the area, the duration of the fishery, the number of licensed vessels fishing within an area (i.e., limited participation) and recently, through share-based demonstration fisheries (some areas and gear types). Other tools include altering gear efficiency or fishing power through manipulation of permitted gears (e.g., net length or depth, mesh sizes). Any available surplus stocks are harvested by nets and troll terminally, adjacent to natal streams using knowledge of run timing as a management tool to limit bycatch of non-target stocks and species. Time and area closures, as well as selective fishing techniques, are used to protect specific non-target populations or species of concern.

13.2.5.3.2 Harvest Approach for Inside Southern Chum Terminal Fisheries

Management escapement goals (MEG) are in place for most Chum-bearing systems within the ISC terminal area. All terminal Chum fisheries are managed under a general fixed escapement strategy (i.e., target harvest is any surplus to the MEG), but implementation details differ by area.

Table 13–28 and Table 13–29 summarize the fishery reference points and harvest guidelines for the Strait of Georgia terminal fisheries.

Annual implementation of the harvest guidelines follows the general approach below:

- Terminal fisheries are managed based on escapement with fisheries initiated to harvest abundances in terminal areas.

- Terminal Chum fisheries are generally implemented with shorter, low impact openings early in the run, and then expanded as warranted by in-season information. For example, terminal Chum fisheries in the Strait of Georgia typically have short initial openings and are either extended or closed depending on in-season escapement data and catch information from the initial opening.

Harvest opportunities in terminal fisheries are typically based on the lower quartile of the probability distribution for the abundance estimate (i.e., estimated 3 out of 4 chance that abundance is larger; 25th percentile).

Table 13–28: Management Escapement Goals (MEG) and Harvest Plans for Terminal Chum Fisheries in the Strait of Georgia

	Area 14 (Puntledge, Little Qualicum and Big Qualicum)	Area 16 (aggregate escapement Goal)
Management Escapement Goal	240,000 (includes 10K hatchery broodstock)	85,000
Based on	These are interim targets based on stock recruit relationships for each of these populations	Habitat area and Chum spawning densities in the various rivers, combined for the aggregate
Major Systems	Puntledge (60K goal), Little Qualicum (85K goal), Big Qualicum (85K goal)	Tzoonie, Deserter, Brittain, Vancouver, and Skwawka Rivers
In-season Assessment	Early catches, visual observations at river estuaries and escapement counts in the three river systems completed by hatchery and stock assessment staff.	Visual surveys by DFO Stock Assessment and shishalh Nation Resource Management staff.

	Area 14 (Puntledge, Little Qualicum and Big Qualicum)	Area 16 (aggregate escapement Goal)
Implementation strategy	Manage early-season fisheries to meet aggregate spawner goal but also avoid large surpluses (>100K). If forecast exceeds 340K (240K escapement goal plus 100K to account for forecast uncertainty), then target for early fisheries is 65% of the surplus, and remaining fisheries occur once abundance is confirmed in-season. If forecast falls below 240K, then river-specific escapement levels for the 3 major systems must be almost achieved for full-fleet commercial fisheries to be considered (70% of Puntledge, 75% of Little Qualicum and of Big Qualicum). The Area D limited-entry 10-vessel CSAF assessment fishery (Appendix 4) will be planned to commence in the third week of October and may proceed based on results from the Area 12 test fishery and the likelihood of achieving the 1M critical threshold for Inside Southern Chum. The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the utility of early fishery CPUE in predicting terminal run size for the aggregate of the MVI systems.	Fisheries would occur after aggregate goal is achieved (i.e., fish observed in-river and inside a designated sanctuary area), but there have been no commercial openings in recent years. Potential implementation of a weekly assessment fishery with limited fleet size (3-5 vessels) in conjunction with river escapement assessments is being explored.

Table 13–29: Management Escapement Goals (MEG) and Harvest Plans for Terminal Chum Fisheries in the Strait of Georgia

	Area 17 (Nanaimo River)	Area 18 (Cowichan River)	Area 19 (Goldstream River)
MEG	40,000	160,000	15,000
Based on	This is an interim target based on stock recruit relationship	Habitat area and Chum spawning densities in the Cowichan River	Habitat area and Chum spawning densities in the Goldstream River
Major Systems	Nanaimo River	Cowichan River	Goldstream River

	Area 17 (Nanaimo River)	Area 18 (Cowichan River)	Area 19 (Goldstream River)
In-season Assessment	Historically, a variety of visual survey methods were employed to estimate escapement into the Nanaimo River. Since 2013, a joint Snuneymuxw/DFO fixed site DIDSON/ARIS counter program has been used. If weather permits, hatchery staff conduct swim surveys to help validate and provide species composition for the ARIS program, as well as enumerate Chum spawning below the ARIS site.	In-river Chum escapement estimates are provided by an ARIS counter ran jointly by the Cowichan Tribes and DFO located in the lower river since 2006. Prior to this, Chum were enumerated by test fishing and over-flight visual surveys.	Visual surveys via stream walks by hatchery staff; subject to AUC expansion post-season.
Implementation strategy	Commercial openings occur only if in-season observations indicate a high probability of meeting the spawning goal. A small allocation demonstration fishery is considered after 15,000 Chum have passed the ARIS counter dependent on date. Further commercial opportunities are based on abundance/date triggers as discussed and agreed upon at the Nanaimo Harvest Roundtable.	Commercial openings occur only if in-season observations indicate a high probability of meeting the spawning goal. A small allocation demonstration fishery will be offered first and is dependent on in-season data and confidence of exceeding the spawning goal, and agreed upon at the Cowichan Harvest Roundtable. Further commercial opportunities are based on abundance/date triggers as discussed and agreed upon at the Cowichan Harvest Roundtable.	Commercial openings occur only if in-season observations indicate a high probability of meeting the spawning goal. A small allocation demonstration fishery is considered at 10,000 Chum in-river dependent on date. Further commercial opportunities are based on abundance/date triggers as discussed and agreed upon with local First Nations and Harvest Committees.

13.2.5.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH, AND CONSTRAINTS TO INSIDE SOUTHERN CHUM FISHERIES

Refer to Table 13–30 for management actions specific to ISC terminal fisheries. If there are fisheries proceeding in 2026, they will be occurring in terminal areas outside of the migratory path of IFR Steelhead and thus will not be impacted by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures. The areas are outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

Table 13–30: Incidental Harvest, Bycatch and Constraints to ISC Terminal Fisheries

Area	Incidental Harvest, Bycatch and Constraints to Inside Southern Chum Fisheries
Nimpkish (Subarea 12-19)	Observations in recent years have shown consistently low abundance of Chum returning to the Nimpkish River. In 2018, fry releases from transplanted Puntledge Chum Salmon began, and have continued annually. These Chum return earlier than the natal Nimpkish River stocks, potentially increasing the likelihood of interacting with the ISC mixed-stock fishery, although the openings occur South of the Nimpkish River, and the terminal/approach areas are closed. The first year of returns from the transplanted Chum was 2021 for 3-year-old fish, and a small number of Chum were observed in the Nimpkish River. In 2024, an estimated 16,298 adults were observed in the river. The return decreased in 2025 to just over 3,000 adults, but ongoing hatchery supplementation and transplantation from Puntledge are expected to improve production from the Nimpkish, with hopes of re-establishing Chum in the watershed. The status of the natal Nimpkish Chum population continues to be poor, although their run-timing will likely allow for separation from the transplanted Puntledge Chum returns, and potential for rebuilding should conditions improve.

Area	Incidental Harvest, Bycatch and Constraints to Inside Southern Chum Fisheries
Area 14	Fishery boundaries are in place during the Steelhead window closure to protect migrating IFR Steelhead. Beach boundaries are generally in effect to protect Coho and Chinook. Boundaries may range from zero to one and a half miles depending upon bycatch concerns and time of year. A Fillongley Creek radius boundary and Baynes Sound closures are in effect to protect wild Chum and Coho stocks. Coho conservation measures are in effect until November 10, including non-retention, maximum soak times for gill nets, barbless hooks for trollers and mandatory brailing and sorting for seines. The gill net fishery may be restricted to daylight hours only if there are significant levels of non-target species catch (e.g., Coho). The presence of sea lions in Area 14 appears to have reduced net and troll CPUE, reduced escapement in some streams, and altered migration and holding behaviour, which has impacted assessment capabilities. These impacts will be considered in the management of the fishery, and may include exploring new assessment techniques.
Area 16	There is mandatory non-retention of Coho. Fishing is limited to terminal areas to minimize impacts on passing stocks.
Area 17	Fishery boundaries are in place to protect migrating stocks such as Fraser River Chum and IFR Steelhead and to confine the fishery to the Nanaimo River stock. Coho conservation measures in effect include mandatory brailing and sorting for seines, and revival boxes. The gill net fishery may be restricted to daylight hours and maximum soak times if Coho encounters are high. Restrictions would be implemented after consultation with the Nanaimo Harvest Roundtable.

Area	Incidental Harvest, Bycatch and Constraints to Inside Southern Chum Fisheries
Area 18	There is a half a nautical mile boundary in effect off Cherry Point to protect Coho holding in this area. Beach boundaries may be in effect to protect Coho and Chinook. Cowichan Bay is typically closed to protect Coho and Chinook and to provide a refuge for holding Chum; however, if Chum escapement targets are reached and timing is such that Chinook escapement is complete, this area could be opened to access surplus Chum. This would occur following consultation with the Cowichan Harvest Roundtable. Other Coho conservation measures in effect include non-retention, barbless hooks for troll, mandatory brailing and sorting for seines, and revival boxes. The gill net fishery may be restricted to daylight hours and maximum soak times if Coho encounters are high. Restrictions would be implemented after consultation with the Cowichan Harvest Roundtable.
Area 19	Subarea boundaries may be put into effect to protect Chinook and Coho holding in Squally Reach. Other Coho conservation measures in effect include mandatory brailing and sorting for seines, and revival boxes. The gill net fishery may be restricted to daylight hours and maximum soak times if Coho encounters are high. Restrictions would be implemented after consultation with the Local Harvest Committees and local First Nations.

13.2.5.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.2.5.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food, Social and Ceremonial Fisheries

First Nations target local salmon stocks for FSC purposes throughout the Inner South Coast. First Nations harvest of Chum Salmon can fluctuate depending on individual areas, preference, strength of Chum return, as well as status and availability of other salmon species annually. Refer to Table 10–1 for Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts in Southern B.C./Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

Mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce disturbance to Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within Southern B.C. waters and key foraging areas within the Swiftsure Bank area, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Gulf Islands and near the mouth of the Fraser River. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.2 and 5.6.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under this licence, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by this vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Treaty Fisheries

Tla'amin Fisheries (Domestic)

Tla'amin Domestic fisheries for local Chum stocks will not be affected by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

The Tla'amin Fishing Area for all species of Fish and Aquatic Plants is within portions of Pacific Fisheries Management Areas 13, 14, 15, and 16.

The Domestic allocations for Chum Salmon under the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjux^wegəs) are as follows:

Sliammon River Chum

When the Available Terminal Harvest for Sliammon River Chum Salmon is less than or equal to 7,400, a number of Sliammon River Chum Salmon equal to the Available Terminal Harvest for Sliammon River Chum Salmon; or

When the Available Terminal Harvest for Sliammon River Chum Salmon is greater than 7,400, then 7,400 Sliammon River Chum Salmon plus 25% of that portion of the Available Terminal Harvest of Sliammon River Chum Salmon that is greater than 7,400.

Terminal Chum

A number of Chum Salmon equal to 25% of the Available Terminal Harvest for the Chum Salmon stocks that originate from a Terminal Harvest Area, other than Sliammon River Chum Salmon stocks, if the Minister determines that there is an Available Terminal Harvest for those stocks.

Tla'amin Nation and DFO have collaborated on the development of biologically based benchmarks for selected terminal salmon populations in PFMA 15, which have informed updated the escapement goals and associated harvest management approaches. These changes will be implemented beginning in 2026, with the harvest management framework subject to ongoing review in future years.

The Tla'amin Nation provides catch reports to the Department through the Aboriginal Harvest Management System (AHMS). The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing time period, location of harvest, harvest count by species, harvest effort, and biological samples.

13.2.5.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

Marine recreational fisheries will not be impacted by 2026 conservation measures to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead.

Recreational fisheries targeting ISC terminal stocks take place in tidal and non-tidal waters and angler effort is focused on terminal Chum returning to the Puntledge, Qualicum, Nanaimo and Cowichan river systems.

Tidal Chum recreational fisheries are typically open year-round, with the majority of marine recreational Chum harvest occurring in Areas 13 from late September to late October. The normal daily limit is four, however this may be reduced in years of low abundance.

For 2026, the Department will continue to use the Salmon Outlook to inform recreational Chum fishery planning. Due to the improved outlook and expectation that commercial harvests will occur on Southern BC Chum, the recreation fishery will start the season with a daily retention limit of two (2) per day in place. In-season, commercial opportunities and recreational retention rules will be informed by estimates of abundance.

Preliminary expectations are modest for 2026 for both the Fraser River and the South Coast Chum stocks, with preliminary Outlook categories of 2-3.

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.6.

In non-tidal waters, Chum retention is typically permitted based on observed abundances and primarily occurs in hatchery systems. Subject to in-season assessment information, freshwater recreational fisheries can retain Chum in several of the watersheds (e.g., Puntledge, Cowichan,

Qualicum and Nanaimo). Total (marine and freshwater) recreational harvests have been less than 5,000 fish in recent years.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast Area Stock Assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

13.2.5.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

Canadian commercial fisheries are managed to try and achieve allocation targets in the commercial allocation implementation plan. Commercial fishery allocations take into account catches of Inside Southern Chum including: Johnstone Strait Mixed-Stock fisheries, Terminal area fisheries, and the Fraser River fisheries. In the ISC Terminal, fishing effort focuses on terminal harvests in a few larger systems (some of them with substantial hatchery supplementation).

Allocation

Table 13–31: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan (from the 2015–current period).

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Inside	11 to 19, 28 to 29	63.0%	19.2%	12.0%	0.0%	5.8%

Inside Southern Chum Terminal Commercial Fisheries

For 2026 a below average return is expected for most Strait of Georgia systems due to low returns in the 2021, 2022 and 2023 brood years, combined with ongoing poor productivity. Stocks in the southern part of the Strait of Georgia (Nanaimo, Goldstream) are forecast near escapement targets, and mid-Island and mainland stocks well below target abundance. However, 2025 returns suggest Nanaimo and Goldstream systems may exceed escapement targets if conditions remain similar to the previous year while Cowichan will fall short.

Chum fishing opportunities in terminal areas will be determined in-season and discussed through pre-season meetings and the in-season Chum Working Group. The following opportunities may be available but will be subject to additional conservation measures being implemented in 2026 to protect IFR Steelhead. For Johnstone Strait and Strait of Georgia, a 42-day rolling window closure will apply to commercial gill net and purse seine fisheries and a 27-day rolling window closure will apply to commercial troll fisheries. Closure dates and areas are

outlined in [Appendix 7](#). Terminal fisheries targeting terminal abundances that are understood to not be on the migratory route of IFR Steelhead will be opened if those stock abundances permit. Areas for exclusion are also described in [Appendix 7](#).

The fisheries in each area are managed as follows:

Mainland Inlet terminal fisheries: Any Mainland Inlet terminal fisheries targeting Chum would be managed in-season based on terminal abundance, and harvesting would be by seine, gill net or troll gear. Fishery openings would be confined to minimize incidental harvest of other passing Chum stocks and species.

Johnstone Strait terminal fisheries: No fishing opportunities directed at Nimpkish River Chum are anticipated due to both recent trends of poor returns and 2026 management measures for IFR Steelhead. In-season assessment will confirm the potential for any harvest opportunities; however, there have been no opportunities in recent years.

Strait of Georgia terminal fisheries: Managed in-season based on terminal abundance. Chum harvests focus on terminal stocks listed below; however, there may be incidental retention of some other minor local stocks in the terminal areas as well. The major systems are:

Area 14 - Puntledge, Qualicum and Little Qualicum: The fishery is directed at the enhanced stocks of these three river systems. Chum returning to this area have been enhanced since the late 1960s and terminal fisheries have occurred in October and November since the 1970s. ESSR fisheries are possible on enhanced stocks. Terminal Chum fisheries in Area 14 will take place only in those waters exempt from the IFR Steelhead conservation measures as described in [Appendix 7](#).

- Area D gill net openings are possible starting in October. As outlined in [Appendix 4](#), Area D gill net has a limited-entry, 10-vessel CSAF assessment fishery for Area 14 Chum that may commence in the third week of October to evaluate the utility of early fishery CPUE in predicting terminal run size for the aggregate of the MVI systems. Further gill net openings are subject to overall abundance in Area 14 and escapements in the Puntledge, Qualicum and Little Qualicum Rivers.
- Area B seine limited effort opportunities may be available in late October dependent on escapement levels, abundance and allocation status. Full fleet opportunities may also be available.
- Area H troll openings are possible starting in October. Further troll openings are subject to overall abundance in Area 14 and escapements in the Puntledge, Qualicum and Little Qualicum Rivers.

Area 15 – Malaspina Strait: No targeted commercial fisheries for Chum are anticipated.

- Tla'amin Nation has an approved CSAF proposal for a cultural and economic fishery targeting Theodosia River Chum Salmon in Okeover Inlet (Subarea 15-4). The development of the harvest management strategy and annual fishing plans will be a collaborative process with Areas B seine, D gill net, and H troll.

Area 16 - Jervis Inlet: The terminal fishery targets wild Chum stocks returning to river systems in the Jervis Inlet area. The main systems are Tzoonie, Deserted and Skwawka Rivers. Commercial opportunities are not anticipated due to the continued recent trend of poor returns; this will be confirmed in-season. Openings in this area generally take place in late-October to mid-November.

Area 17 – Nanaimo: The fishery is directed primarily at Nanaimo River stocks. The Nanaimo River Chum stocks are supplemented by the Nanaimo River Hatchery. Openings usually occur in October and early November. Terminal Chum fisheries in Area 17 will take place only in those waters exempt from the 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures as described in [Appendix 7](#).

Area 18 – Cowichan: The fishery is directed primarily at Cowichan River stocks. Cowichan Chum, and to some extent Goldstream Chum, are harvested. Chemainus River stocks are also impacted but likely to a lesser extent. Openings generally occur in late October to late November. Openings are subject to in-season abundance estimates for the Cowichan River. Commercial net fisheries in Satellite Channel are possible based on returns to both the Cowichan River and Goldstream River. Terminal Chum fisheries in Area 18 will take place only in those waters exempt from the 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures as described in [Appendix 7](#).

Area 19 – Goldstream (Saanich Inlet): The fishery is directed primarily at Goldstream River Chum stocks, but some Cowichan River Chum are harvested incidentally. The Goldstream River Chum stocks are supplemented by the Goldstream River Hatchery. Openings generally occur in late October to early December with possible commercial net fisheries in Saanich Inlet. Openings are subject to in-season abundance estimates for the Goldstream (and to some extent, the Cowichan) rivers.

Other Considerations:

- Area E gill net, Area B seine, and Area H troll opportunities are subject to in-season abundance estimates and licence area allocation status.

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and to reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.2.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information for all commercial fisheries.

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

Demonstration Fisheries

The Area H Harvest Committee has demonstration fishery proposals for Mainland Inlet Pink and Chum in Jervis Inlet, Mainland Inlet Pink and Chum in Broughton Archipelago and Bute Inlet Chum under the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework process. See [Appendix 5](#) for more details.

The Area D Harvest Committee has demonstration fishery proposals for Bute Inlet Chum and Qualicum and Puntledge (Area 14) Chum, under the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework process. See [Appendix 4](#) for more details.

For 2026, these fisheries are to be operated in times and areas outside of the rolling window closures identified to protect IFR Steelhead outlined in [Appendix 7](#). The duration of the window closures will be 42 days for commercial gill net and purse seine fisheries and 27 days for commercial troll fisheries. These terminal fisheries targeting terminal abundances that are understood to not be on the migratory route of IFR Steelhead will remain open. Areas for exemption are also listed in [Appendix 7](#).

Inside Southern Chum Terminal First Nations Commercial Harvest

Demonstration fishery proposals for Bute Inlet, Area 14 Terminal areas, Nanaimo, and Goldstream Chum are implemented under the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework process. See [Appendix 4](#) for more details.

Tla’amin Nation has an approved CSAF proposal for a cultural and economic fishery targeting Theodosia River Chum Salmon in Okeover Inlet (Subarea 15-4). The development of the harvest management strategy and annual fishing plans will be a collaborative process with Areas B seine, D gill net, and H troll.

For 2026, these fisheries are to be operated in times and areas outside of the rolling window closures identified to protect IFR Steelhead outlined in [Appendix 7](#). The duration of the window closures will be 42 days for commercial gill net and purse seine fisheries and 27 days for commercial troll fisheries. These terminal fisheries targeting terminal abundances that are understood to not be on the migratory route of IFR Steelhead will remain open. Areas for exemption are also listed in [Appendix 7](#).

13.2.5.5.4 Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirement Fisheries

ESSR fisheries may be considered in the following rivers: Qualicum, Little Qualicum, Puntledge, Nanaimo, Cowichan, Goldstream, and Sliammon.

13.2.6 WEST COAST VANCOUVER ISLAND CHUM – OVERVIEW

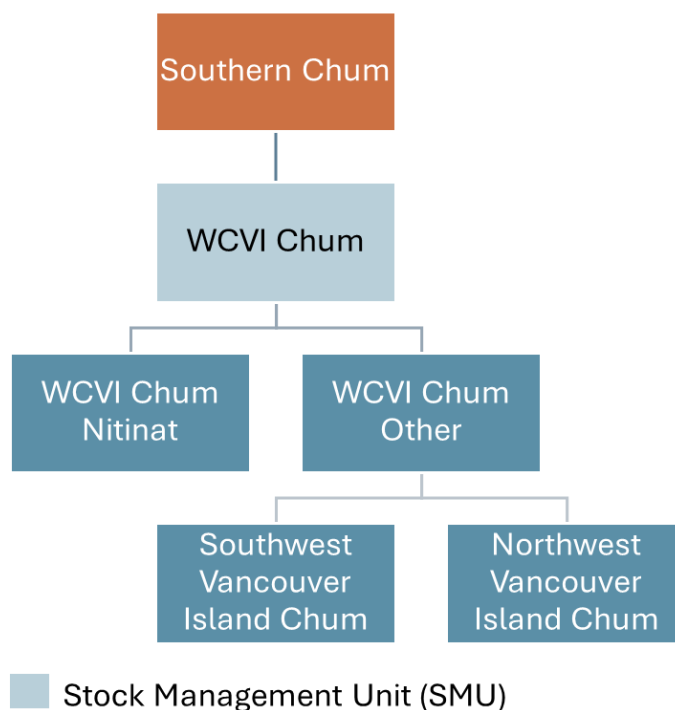


Figure 13–13: Overview of West Coast Vancouver Island Chum

13.2.7 WCVI CHUM - NITINAT

13.2.7.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT



Figure 13–14: Overview of WCVI Chum – Nitinat

13.2.7.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.2.7.2.1 Pre-season

Beginning in 2022, this fishery was closed to protect stocks of conservation concern. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer-term fishery closures.

Annual pre-season forecasts for the Nitinat system (predominantly enhanced) have been based on brood year escapements, hatchery smolt output and estimated survival rates. The pre-season Nitinat Chum forecast was not available at the time of publication.

13.2.7.2.2 In-Season

Nitinat Hatchery staff work in cooperation with the Ditidaht First Nation's fishery program to assess escapement of Chum into Nitinat Lake and area. Through a combination of observations gathered from river surveys (swims, boat-based, and helicopter), brood collection activities and in-lake gillnet fisheries by Ditidaht First Nation; an in-season estimate of abundance is generated. Although there is high degree of uncertainty in the abundance estimate, it is generated from consistently applied survey methods, by observers with significant local knowledge and experience. Therefore, it provides a general gauge of the observed escapement relative to in-season escapement benchmarks defined for Nitinat Lake and area.

A scientific licence may be issued to the Ditidaht First Nation to provide biological samples and additional information on stock status and movement in Nitinat Lake.

A test fishery occurred in Nitinat Lake in the past; however, it has been replaced with the assessment fishery mentioned above.

13.2.7.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Beginning in 2022, the PFMA 21/121 Nitinat fishery was closed due to bycatch concerns for Interior Fraser River Steelhead. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone.

Fisheries planning for the Ditidaht Nation, Area E and Area B in PFMA 22 and/or potential changes to the Nitinat hatchery production plan will be consulted on with the Ditidaht First Nation and stakeholders. Nitinat Chum FSC fisheries will remain open. Recreational and ESSR fisheries may be open depending on abundance.

See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer-term fishery closures.

A combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to

Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within southern BC waters and key foraging areas within the Swiftsure Bank area, Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Gulf Islands and near the mouth of the Fraser River. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

13.2.7.4 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.2.7.4.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food Social and Ceremonial Fisheries

FSC fisheries for Nitinat Chum will not be impacted by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Ditidaht First Nation targets Chum stocks for FSC purposes in Areas 21, 22 and 121. Most harvest occurs in Nitinat Lake (Area 22).

Refer to Table 10–1 for Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts in Southern BC/Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

5.4 Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. If a commercial vessel is used for fishing under this licence, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by the vessel to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours of the landing of fish harvested from that vessel. Catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Treaty Fisheries

There are no treaty fisheries for Nitinat Chum.

13.2.7.4.2 Recreational Fisheries

Recreational fisheries targeting Nitinat Chum take place primarily in Nitinat Lake (Area 22). Chum recreational fisheries are open year-round. The normal daily limit is four. In the Nitinat River, retention for Chum opens October 15 with a daily limit of two. Opening the freshwater recreational fishery is contingent on achieving escapement goals and mitigating concerns for

impacts on spawning fish. There is a finfish closure at mouth of the Nitinat River to prevent foul hooking.

For 2026 it is anticipated that Chum opportunities will be available for Nitinat Chum in terminal areas. In-season updates are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/index-eng.html>

For offshore WCVI, this is considered a mixed-stock area and will be managed based on pre-season expectations and in-season abundance indicators for southern BC Chum in general including Fraser River Chum. Updates are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website:

<http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

13.2.7.4.3 Commercial Fisheries

Allocation

The overall fishery allocation targets are outlined below.

Table 13–32: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
Nitinat	21 to 22	65.5%	0.0%	34.5%	*	0.0%

* bycatch provision

WCVI – Nitinat Commercial Chum Fisheries

Beginning in 2022, the PFMA 21/121 Nitinat fishery was closed due to bycatch concerns for IFR Steelhead. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer term fishery closures.

Fisheries planning for the Ditidaht Nation, Area E and Area B in PFMA 22 and/or potential changes to the Nitinat hatchery production plan will be consulted on with the Ditidaht First Nation and stakeholders. Commercial fishing opportunities in Area 22 for Nitinat Chum are not expected in 2026.

Area G Troll

Chum may be retained as bycatch in fisheries targeting other stocks (e.g., AABM Chinook fishery) when abundance permits. There are no directed troll fisheries on Nitinat Chum. No Area G troll fishing in Areas 21 and 121 will take place from September 18 to October 14 to address IFR Steelhead bycatch concerns.^{5.4}

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information for all commercial fisheries:

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

WCVI – First Nations Commercial Chum Harvest

13.2.7.4.4 There are currently no First Nations commercial fisheries for Nitinat Chum. ESSR Fisheries

ESSR fisheries in Nitinat Lake can occur when surpluses to escapement goals are identified and broodstock egg targets are anticipated to be exceeded. ESSR fisheries may commence on the predominantly male Chum that arrive first before the total run size is forecasted in-season. The Ditidaht First Nation participates in the ESSR fishery in coordination with Nitinat Hatchery staff and broodstock collection activities.

13.2.8 WCVI CHUM - OTHER

13.2.8.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

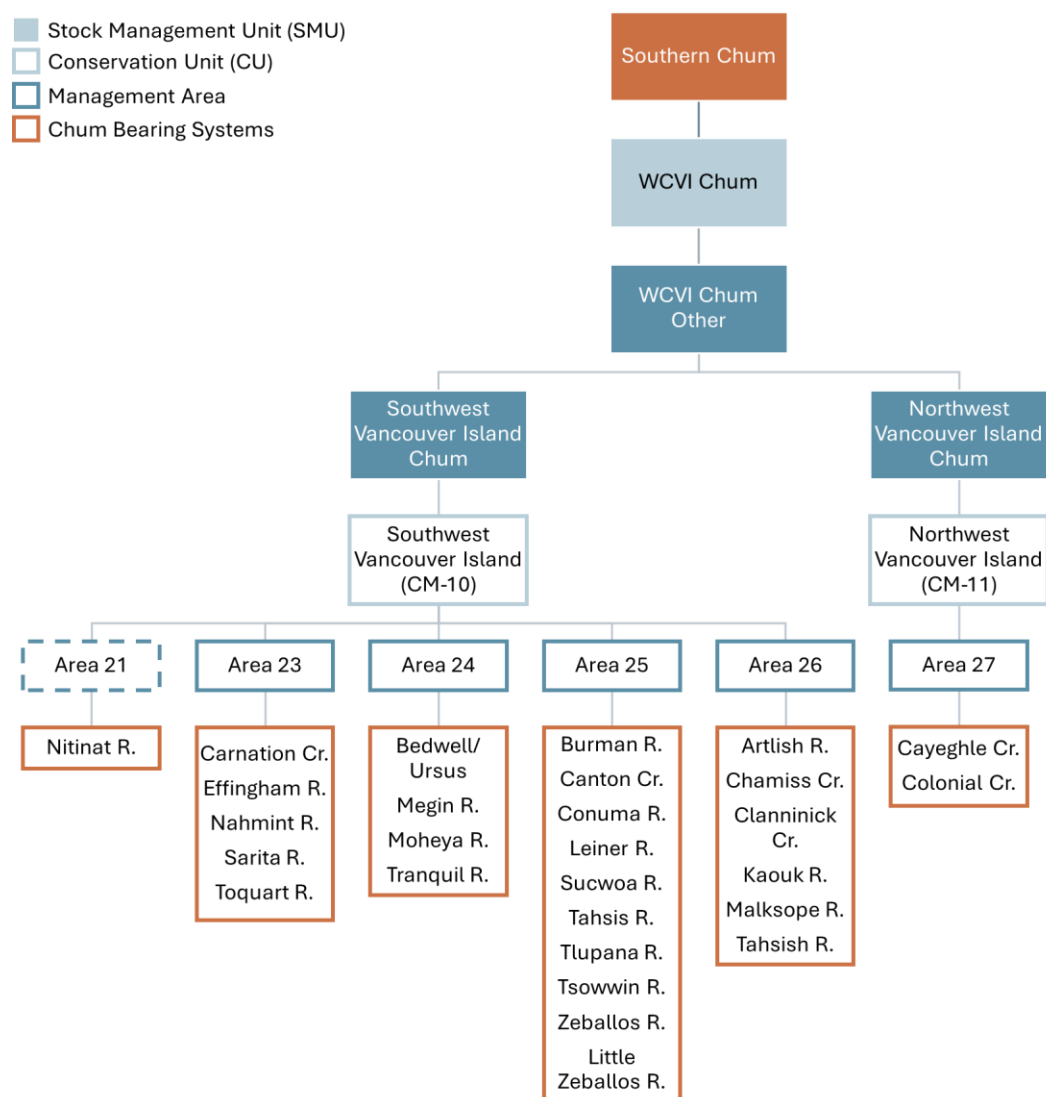


Figure 13–15: Overview of WCVI Chum - Other

Note that the management approach for enhanced Nitinat Chum is described separately in the WCVI Chum – Nitinat section 13.2.3.

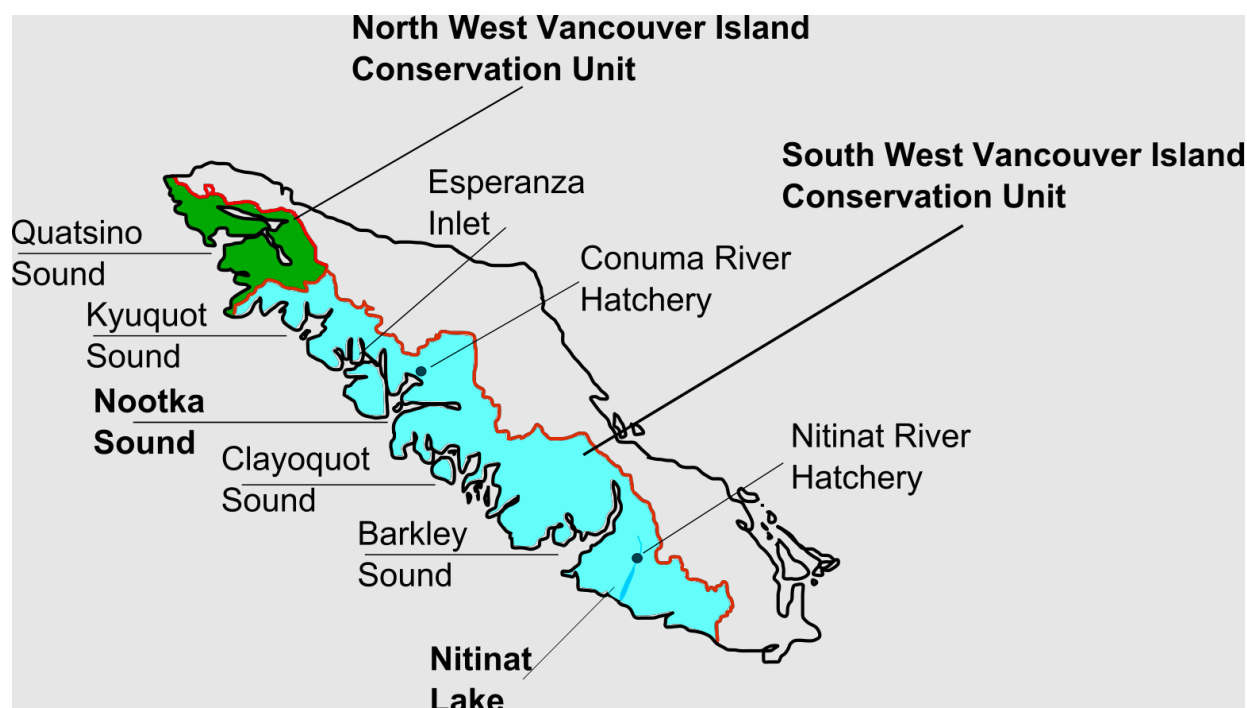


Figure 13-16: Map of WCVI Chum - Other Fisheries

Population Structure of WCVI Chum

Chum salmon occur throughout the West Coast of Vancouver Island (WCVI) and have been grouped into 2 Conservation Units (CU) under the Wild Salmon Policy (WSP):

1. Southwest Vancouver Island (SWVI) with roughly 170 distinct spawning sites
2. Northwest Vancouver Island (NWVI) with roughly 60 distinct spawning sites

Major runs of Chum salmon originate in the following systems:

Area 20: De Mamiel Cr., Sooke R.

Area 22: Nitinat R. (enhanced). Note: The management approach for Nitinat Chum is described separately in the WCVI Chum – Nitinat section 13.2.3.

Area 23: Cous Cr., Effingham R., Little Toquart Cr., Nahmint R., Sarita R., Toquart R.

Area 24: Atleo River, Moyeha River, Tranquil Creek, Warn Bay Creek.

Area 25: Black Creek, Burman River, Canton Creek (enhanced), Conuma River (enhanced), Deserted Creek, Espinosa Creek, Leiner River, Sucwoa River, Tahsis River, Tlupana River (enhanced), Tsowinn River, Zeballos River

Area 26: Kaouk River, Artlish River, Tahsish River, Chamiss Creek, Clanninick Creek, Malksope River

Area 27: Colonial / Cayeghle Creeks

13.2.8.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.2.8.2.1 Pre-season

Method: WCVI Chum mature and return to the terminal area as mainly 3, 4, and 5 year old fish. For naturally spawning stocks, expected returns for each contributing brood year are forecast based on observed spawner abundance and long term (or recent) average recruitment and maturation rates, reflective of changing marine conditions over time. Except for the 2024 return year, WCVI Chum have experienced a decline in productivity since 2016.

Also affected by the same recent trend in poor productivity, hatchery returns for each contributing brood year are forecasted based on hatchery releases and marine survival rates. For both naturally spawning and hatchery stocks, observed returns of younger age classes are used to adjust forecasts of older age classes from the same brood year. Additionally, for naturally spawning stocks, forecast returns of index populations within each terminal area are expanded based on their average historical contribution to production within the area.

Pre-season forecasts for WCVI stock management units were not available at the time of publication.

Sources of Uncertainty: Likely, as a function of lower quality assessment data (i.e., age data available for a limited number of stocks, estimates of spawner abundance are low quality) and resulting from the highly volatile lower river spawning habitat that Chum favor, the performance of Chum forecasts is relatively poor. Some of the key sources of uncertainty include: incomplete age data across stocks, uncertainty in spawner abundance, uncertainty in marine survival, uncertainty in relative levels of production among index and non-index stocks.

13.2.8.3 IN-SEASON

When the catch-per-unit effort in fisheries is related to run size, fishery data can be used to provide in-season stock assessment information. This approach is responsive to in-season abundances rather than pre-season forecasts that are highly uncertain, particularly for Chum stocks. In the case that fishery results suggest the abundances are relatively low as expected, the resulting harvest rate will not significantly impede stock rebuilding. Alternatively, if results suggest the abundance is higher than expected, harvest opportunities are not unnecessarily foregone.

13.2.8.4 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Beginning in 2022, the commercial Chum fisheries in PFMA 23 and 24 were closed due to poor stock status of the target Chum stocks. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer term fishery closures.

For naturally spawning WCVI Chum stocks, upper and lower fishery reference points were developed using the “sustainable escapement goal” or “SEG” approach described in Bue and Hasbrouck (2001). This method uses escapement estimates to set fishery reference points and is suitable for stocks with relatively low quality assessment data, such as WCVI Chum. The SEG algorithm was determined by relating maximum sustained yield (MSY) reference points with time series derived benchmarks for model populations with more reliable data sets for which stock-recruit analysis is feasible. Conservative “SEGs” were defined as the 25% and 75% of a long-term escapement time series. The lower SEG is estimated to represent approximately 0.8 S_{MSY} (i.e., size of spawning population at 80% maximum sustained yield), which is similar to an “upper biological benchmark”, or healthy state, described for salmon populations. (Fishery reference points are used to trigger fisheries, in contrast to biological reference points which are used to assess the conservation status of stocks). Use of precautionary fishery reference points to set abundance-based limits on harvest supports Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) third-party eco-certification of the fishery and also an objective of Canada’s Wild Salmon Policy.

Within each WCVI management area, SEGs were calculated for index populations with higher quality escapement data. To develop fishery reference points for the entire area, index SEGs were summed and this value is expanded based on their average historical contribution to escapement within the area. (Note: forecasts of abundance for each area are estimated from index populations using the same expansion factor). For WCVI hatchery populations, the lower and upper fishery reference points are determined by the needs of the hatchery and spawning objectives for nearby rivers.

Although more work is required to finalize the reference points for natural systems and associated harvest strategy and management plan for WCVI Chum, reference points have been applied in recent years to set target levels for commercial fisheries. That is, commercial fisheries have been curtailed when forecast abundance is below the lower fishery reference point in order to comply with the conditions of MSC certification.

Commercial fisheries for WCVI Chum generally employ a two-tiered harvest strategy for controlling removals; either a constant harvest rate strategy or a surplus-to-escapement goal strategy:

Fixed Harvest Rate Strategy (fisheries targeting natural origin stocks, hatchery stocks at low abundance): For those fisheries where a significant component of the target stock is from naturally spawning populations, a constant harvest rate strategy of 10-20% is implemented. The maximum harvest rate is set at a precautionary level relative to stock-recruit derived optimal exploitation rates for WCVI Chum; which are in the order of 30-40%. This approach allows limited harvest while protecting the biodiversity of Chum stocks and permitting rebuilding when the population is low. In areas of low quality data or only naturally spawning stocks, including Barkley (Area 23), Clayoquot (Area 24), Esperanza Inlet (Area 25) and Kyuquot Sound (Area 26), the maximum allowable harvest rate is 10 to 15%. In Nootka Sound, up to 20% harvest is permitted given the prevalence of hatchery origin stock in the area.

Surplus-to-Escapement Goal Strategy (fisheries targeting hatchery stocks at high abundance): This strategy can apply to Tlupana Inlet Chum fisheries that target hatchery surpluses once escapement goals have been established. The allowable harvest rate would be determined by the escapement goal when the stock is forecasted in-season to be above the Upper Fishery Reference Point and broodstock capture targets have been or will be met.

Tlupana Inlet Chum fisheries only occur in a portion of Area 25 where little or no interception of non-enhanced stocks occurs. All Conuma hatchery Chum are thermally marked, which allows for assessment of the hatchery contribution to fisheries and spawning.

DFO will be working with the five Nations, Area D and the Area 25 Roundtable on fisheries planning for enhanced Conuma Chum in Tlupana Inlet. If pre-season forecasts are above targets, limited fishing opportunities may be considered prior to the targets being achieved in-season. A surplus-to-escapement strategy may be employed once it is certain escapement and hatchery broodstock targets will be met.

In 2025 an interim escapement target of 11,100 for Tlupana Inlet Chum was established in consultation with the Area 25 Roundtable. Additional analysis and consultation may further refine this escapement target.

Stage 1 fisheries are Limited Entry Assessment Fisheries that may occur when the pre-season forecast indicates the run size is below the lower fishery reference point. They require increased monitoring and are designed to provide in-season information about the run size within a low-risk fishing strategy (i.e., limit overall mortality to less than 15%).

Further work on developing assessment criteria needs to occur prior to proceeding with stage 1 assessment fisheries and is contingent on additional consultation with First Nations and stakeholders.

Stage 2 fisheries are Limited Entry or Limited Effort fisheries that may occur when the pre-season forecast or Stage 1 fisheries indicate the run size is above the lower fishery reference point, but below the upper fishery reference point. They are designed to be lower risk and limit mortality to a precautionary level through a fixed harvest rate strategy.

Stage 3 fisheries are Full Fleet fisheries that may occur when the pre-season forecast or Stage 1 and/or 2 fisheries indicate the run size is above the upper fishery reference point. They are designed to be relatively low risk and limit mortality to a precautionary level through a fixed-harvest rate strategy.

Table 13–33: Table on Fishery Triggers of Each Harvest Strategy

Fishery Trigger	Harvest Strategy	Nootka (Enhanced)	Barkley, Clayoquot, Esperanza, Kyuquot
Pre-season forecast below Lower Fishery Reference Point	Assessment Fishery	Stage 1: Assessment Fishery	Stage 1: Assessment Fishery
Pre-season forecast between Lower and Upper Fishery Reference Point	Fixed Harvest Rate	Stage 2: Limited Entry / Limited Effort Fishery	Stage 2: Limited Entry / Limited Effort Fishery
In-season forecast above Upper Fishery Reference Point	Fixed Harvest Rate	Stage 3: Full Fleet/Limited Effort Fishery	Stage 3: Full Fleet / Limited Effort Fishery
In-season forecast above Upper Fishery Reference Point and broodstock capture near target	Surplus to Escapement Goal	Full Fleet terminal fishery	n/a

Local Harvest Committees (Roundtables) that include representatives from First Nations, commercial and recreational sectors, conservation groups, local governments and DFO on the West Coast of Vancouver Island are in various stages of developing local detailed Chum fishing plans, including management guidelines and assessment criteria for all fishery stages.

A combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within Southern BC waters and key foraging areas within the Swiftsure Bank area, Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Gulf Islands and near the mouth of

the Fraser River. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

13.2.8.5 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO WCVI CHUM - OTHER FISHERIES

Bycatch of wild Chinook is a concern for these Chum fisheries. To reduce Chinook encounters, commercial fisheries will start no earlier than September 25 in Kyuquot Sound, Esperanza Inlet and Nootka Sound. An earlier start date in Tlupana Inlet may be considered as the Chinook in this area are enhanced hatchery Chinook. In addition, commercial fisheries will be daylight only to reduce encounters of non-target species.

In general, fishing area and the timing of openings are also designed to avoid specific areas where non-target stocks are prevalent:

In Area 25, Hisnit Inlet is closed during Tlupana Inlet fisheries to protect Deserted River Chum as they are no longer enhanced. A stream-mouth boundary at Marvinas Bay will protect local stocks adjacent to the fishing area.

Given ongoing declines of IFR Steelhead escapement and the assessment of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as Endangered by COSEWIC, DFO is implementing a comprehensive, precautionary approach to the management of all fisheries in Southern BC that are likely to impact this stock of concern. Closed periods for commercial gill net, seine, and troll WCVI Chum-Other fisheries will be applied in Areas and portions of Areas with the potential to encounter these Steelhead stocks. See sections below for further details.

13.2.8.6 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.2.8.6.1 First Nations Fisheries

FSC fisheries for WCVI Chum will not be impacted by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Food Social and Ceremonial Fisheries

WCVI First Nations target Chum stocks for FSC purposes throughout NW and SW Vancouver Island.

Refer to Table 10–1 in Southern B.C./Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

5.4 Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. If a commercial vessel is used for fishing under this licence, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by the vessel to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours of the landing of fish harvested from that vessel. Catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Treaty Fisheries

Treaty fisheries for WVC I Chum will not be impacted by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Maa-nulth Fisheries (Domestic)

The annual Domestic allocations for Chum salmon under the Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement are as follows:

- 3,000 pieces, when the return of Terminal Chum Salmon is critical;
- 6,500 pieces, when the return of Terminal Chum Salmon is low;
- 10,000 pieces, when the return of Terminal Chum Salmon is moderate;
- 14,000 pieces, when the return of Terminal Chum Salmon is abundant;
- 17,500 pieces, when the return of Terminal Chum Salmon is very abundant.

While the Domestic allocation for non-terminal Chum will be based on a maximum and an abundance-based formula that has not been determined.

The Maa-nulth First Nations provide electronic catch reports to the Department. The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing dates, location of harvest, species harvested, harvest effort, and catch (in pieces).

13.2.8.6.2 Five Nations (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht / Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations) Multi-species Fishery

The five Nations multi-species fishery for WVC I Chum will not be impacted by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island - Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined fishing territories and to sell that fish. For further information please see Section 10.3.1.

13.2.8.6.3 Recreational Fisheries

When abundance permits, marine recreational fisheries targeting Southern Chum take place in inshore and offshore waters of the west coast of Vancouver Island (Areas 21 to 27 and 121 to 127). The majority of the Chum catch and effort takes place in September to November in terminal areas. The normal daily limit is four. Tidal recreational limits will be non-retention in WCVI inshore areas where pre-season forecasts are below the lower fishery reference point. These limits may be adjusted subject to in-season abundance indicators. In non-tidal waters, Chum retention is typically permitted based on observed abundances, and primarily occurs in hatchery systems. The Department will consult with local First Nations and Area Harvest Roundtables on potential for retention opportunities where inshore forecasts are above the lower fishery reference point.

For offshore WCVI, this is considered a mixed-stock area and will be managed based on pre-season expectations and in-season abundance indicators for southern BC Chum in general including Fraser River Chum.

5.4 Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

13.2.8.6.4 Commercial Fisheries

Allocation

Table 13–34: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Outside	23 to 27	0.0% ^d	98.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%

^d potential for future re-negotiation if Chum populations re-build

WCVI Chum – Other Commercial Chum Fisheries

Beginning in 2022, the commercial Barkley and Clayoquot Chum fisheries in PFMA 23 and 24 were closed due to poor stock status of the target Chum stocks. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer-term fishery closures. Treaty and FSC fisheries remain open. Recreational fisheries are Chum non-retention in these areas.

Commercial fisheries in Tlupana Inlet, Nootka Sound, Esperanza Inlet, and Kyuquot Sound are based on pre-season forecasts. Pre-season forecasts are not yet available.

The earliest permitted gill net start dates are:

Nootka Sound – Sept. 25 (potential for earlier start in Tlupana Inlet)

Esperanza Inlet – Sept. 25

Kyuquot Sound – Sept. 25 (Area 26-11 will remain closed for IFR Steelhead conservation until October 12)

Detailed planning for any potential Area D Chum fisheries will occur with local First Nations and the Roundtables established in each area. Fishery planning will be dependent on pre-season forecasts and any adjustments to which have occurred in previous years may be considered depending on post-season assessments of past fisheries relative to their estimated achieved harvest rates.

Coho retention in net fisheries may be permitted when abundance permits.

There are separate approach areas and terminal fisheries to facilitate bio-sampling for age and hatchery contribution.

New for 2026-27: In preparation for the possibility of any limited fleet Chum derby fishery on the WCVI, Area D will hold a random draw to select eligible fishers. Details on the selection process will be published via Fishery Notice.

Area G Troll

Chum salmon retention as bycatch in Chinook-directed fisheries may occur depending on pre-season forecasts of abundance for WCVI and Fraser Chum stocks.

To support conservation of IFR Steelhead, a 27-day rolling window closure will be applied to commercial Chinook troll fisheries off of WVCII. These measures are outlined in Table 13–35.

Table 13–35: Interior Fraser River Steelhead Rolling Window Closure Dates for Area G Troll Fishery.

Area Details	Start	End
Area 123	16-Sep	12-Oct
Area 124	13-Sep	9-Oct
Area 125	11-Sep	7-Oct
Area 26-11	8-Sep	4-Oct
Area 126	8-Sep	4-Oct
Areas 27-1 and 27-2 westerly of a line from Cape Parkins (50 26.6395 N, 128 02.8157 W) to Kwakiutl Point (50 21.0552 N, 127 59.4362 W), 27-4 to 27-6)	6-Sep	2-Oct
Area 127	6-Sep	2-Oct

5.4 Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information for all commercial fisheries:

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

WCVI Chum - Other - Chum Demonstration Fisheries

None

Economic Opportunities

Beginning in 2022, the commercial Barkley and Clayoquot Chum fisheries in PFMAs 23 and 24 were closed due to poor stock status of the target Chum stocks. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of longer-term fishery closures. Treaty and FSC fisheries remain open. Recreational fisheries may open depending on abundance.

13.2.8.6.5 ESSR Fisheries

No ESSR opportunities are expected for WCVI – Other Chum stocks. There is, however, the potential for a Surplus to Escapement fishery on Conuma Chum for the five Nations under the Multi-Species Fishery Management Plan

13.3 SOUTHERN COHO SALMON FISHING PLAN

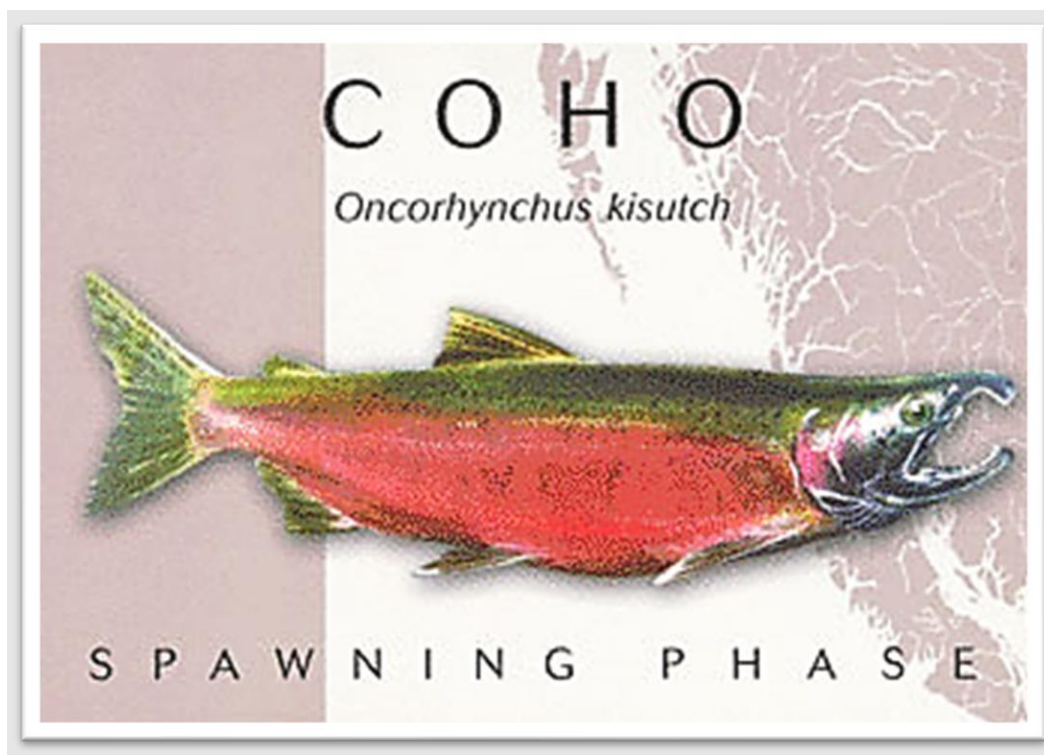
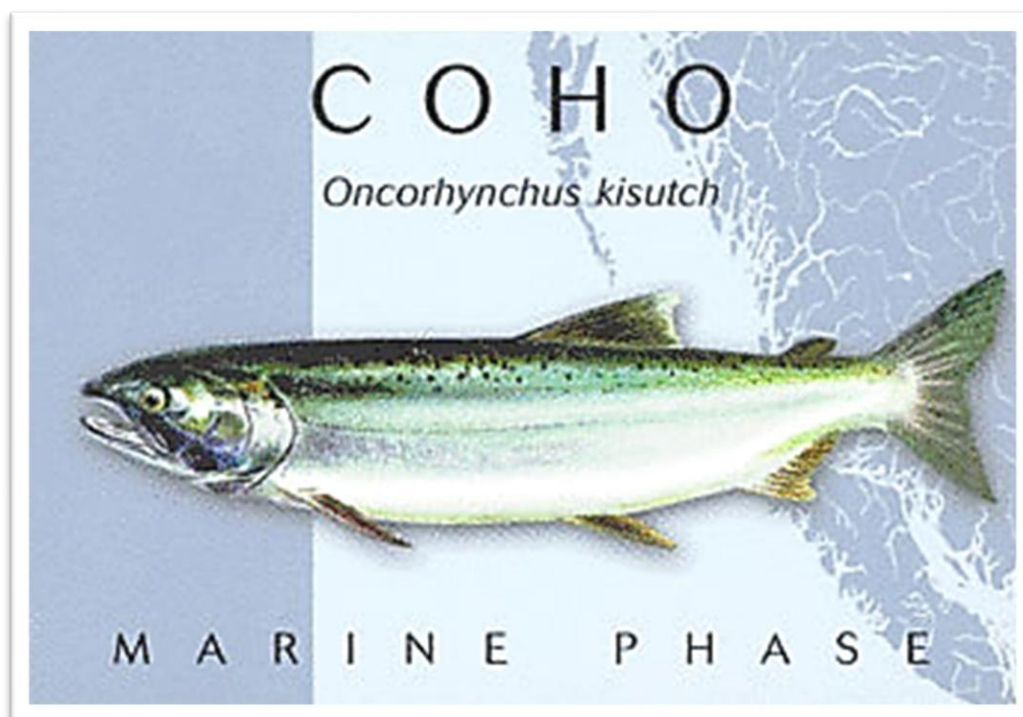


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13.3.1 SOUTHERN COHO - OVERVIEW

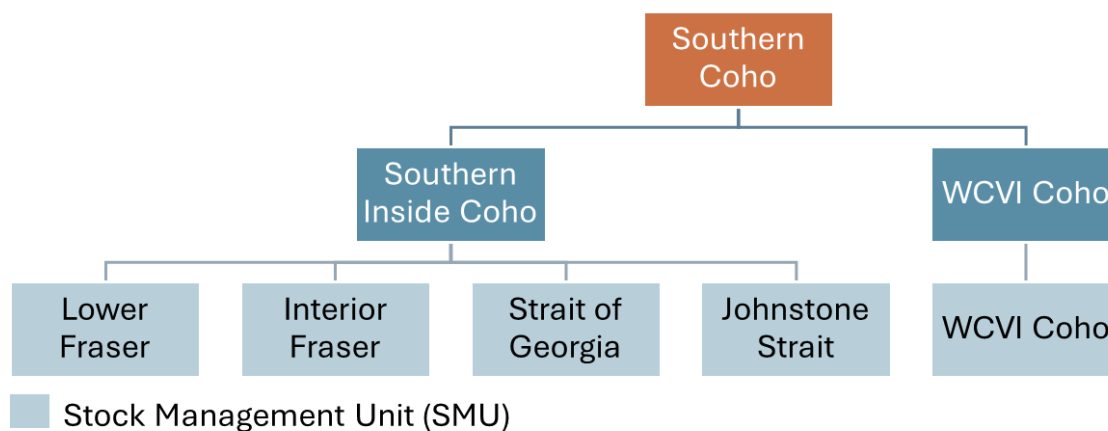


Figure 13–17: Overview of Southern Coho

Coho fisheries in southern BC are managed in a manner consistent with the umbrella of the PST, with considerations for Canadian stocks of concern resulting in a range of measures to reduce fisheries impacts, including selective fishing practices.

PST COHO ABUNDANCE-BASED MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The basis for managing fisheries impacting wild Coho originating from southern BC, Washington State, and Oregon is set out in the PST. This abundance-based management (ABM) system was adopted in 2002 and will define harvests of southern Coho through 2028.

The ABM plan constrains total fishery exploitation of key stock management units (SMUs), including Strait of Georgia, Lower Fraser, and Interior Fraser.

Conservation units in the WCVI and Johnstone Strait are managed domestically.

In the United States, the SMUs relevant to the agreement include the Skagit River, the Stillaguamish, the Snohomish, Hood Canal, tributaries to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Quillayute, the Hoh, Queets, and Grays Harbor.

For each of these SMUs, annual limits of fishing mortality will be established based on the level of abundance and the health of the wild stocks. The text of the agreement and formulae for sharing between the two countries can be found on the PSC website at:

<http://www.psc.org/publications/>.

Under the principles of Coho ABM, as stocks become less abundant, more stringent fishery management actions will be implemented. As stocks become more abundant, increased fishing opportunities will be considered.

13.3.1.1 SOUTHERN COHO ENHANCEMENT INFORMATION:

The major DFO operation enhancement facilities that produce Coho are:

South Coast Area:

- Big Qualicum River hatchery
- Conuma River hatchery
- Nitinat River hatchery
- Puntledge River hatchery
- Quinsam River hatchery
- Robertson Creek hatchery

Fraser River Area:

- Capilano River hatchery
- Chehalis River hatchery
- Chilliwack River hatchery
- Inch Creek hatchery
- Spius Creek hatchery
- Tenderfoot Creek hatchery

SEP Production Plans and Post-Season Production Data

The following website contains links to summaries of the most recent years' Post-Season Production from DFO and DFO-partnered hatcheries, as well as the current version of the SEP Production Plan. Note that from February to June each year the Production Plan is in draft form and is subject to change. From June to the following February, the Final Production Plan is available.

[IFMP SEP Data Tables | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ifmp-sep-data-tables/pacific-region/fisheries-and-oceans-canada)

13.3.1.2 SOUTHERN COHO – SEP PROPOSALS OR UPDATES FOR 2026

Nanaimo River Coho

In support of improved natural spawning success and to reduce in-river competition between natural and hatchery-origin juveniles, the release of fed fry (130k) will cease. The smolt 1+ production will be increased by 36k to support increased harvest opportunities.

Oyster River Coho

In support of improved natural spawning success and to reduce in-river competition between natural and hatchery-origin juveniles, the release of fed fry will be reduced from 40k to 35k, with the release of fry transitioning to a fall release to allow for adipose clipping and to reduce over-summer competition with natural-origin juveniles. Additionally, the release of smolt 1+ will be reduced from 40k to 25k to reduce the proportion of hatchery-origin individuals on the spawning grounds.

Big Qualicum Coho

To ensure cost effective hatchery production for harvest, programs were evaluated to optimize production levels to maintain high CPUE domestic fisheries while minimizing surplus escapement. The release target for Big Qualicum coho smolt 1+ will be decreased from 400k to 350k.

Puntledge River Coho

The release target for Puntledge River coho smolt 1+ will be decreased from 100k to 80k due to rearing capacity constraints during over-summer rearing at Quinsam River Hatchery.

13.3.2 SOUTHERN INSIDE COHO

13.3.2.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

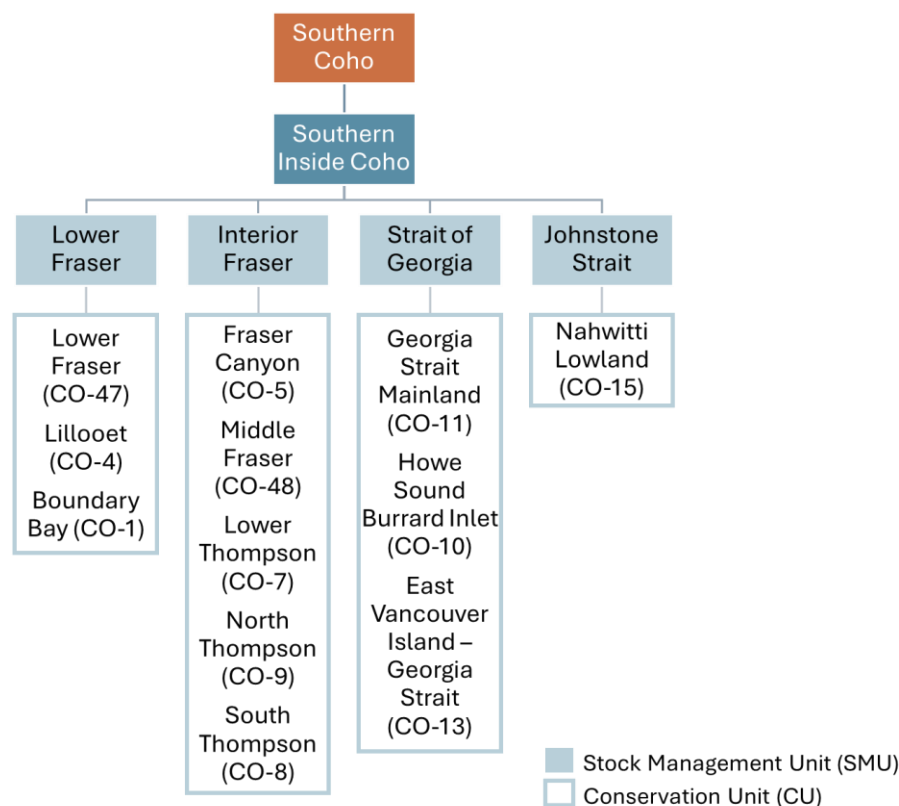


Figure 13–18: Overview of Southern Inside Coho

There are three SMUs identified in the Pacific Salmon Treaty – Southern Coho Management Plan in Annex IV, Chapter 5 - Coho Salmon including: Lower Fraser, Interior Fraser, and Strait of Georgia. In addition, there are also four Conservation Units (CUs) in the Johnstone Strait area including: Homathko-Klinaklini Rivers; Nahwitti Lowland; East Vancouver Island-Johnstone Strait-Southern Fjords; and Southern Coastal Streams-Queen Charlotte Strait- Johnstone Strait-Southern Fjords. These CUs are not actively managed.

Coho may be encountered as bycatch in fisheries directed at other stocks. Depending on the location, First Nations FSC fisheries are generally directed at more abundant stocks and species with retention of hatchery, or hatchery and wild, Coho bycatch considered where abundances permit. Limited First Nations FSC directed fisheries may also be permitted in terminal areas where abundances permit. Most commercial and recreational fisheries in southern B.C. do not permit retention of wild Coho in times and areas where Interior Fraser River Coho may be prevalent. However, mark-selective fisheries have been implemented in most southern B.C.

recreational fisheries and some commercial fisheries permit retention of hatchery-enhanced stocks, while minimizing impacts on wild stocks.

13.3.2.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Southern Coho Assessment Overview

In 2016, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) published an assessment and status report on one designatable unit (DU) of Coho Salmon - Interior Fraser population. COSEWIC status reports are used to assign risk status to wildlife species.

COSEWIC assessed Interior Fraser River Coho as Threatened. The report is available online at:

https://wildlife-species.canada.ca/species-risk-registry/virtual_sara/files/cosewic/sr_Coho%20salmon_2016_e.pdf

Recovery Potential Assessment (RPA) for Interior Fraser River Coho is available at:

<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/40864030.pdf>

The WSP biological status of the five Interior Fraser River Coho CUs has been assessed by CSAS. The Science Advisory Report is available at:

http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2015/2015_022-eng.html

Under recent amendments to Canada's *Fisheries Act*, Limit Reference Points (LRPs) are required for all fish stocks prescribed under Section IX of the *Fishery (General) Regulations* (FGR). Stocks that are below their LRP will trigger the development of a rebuilding plan (regulatory) whereas stocks above their LRP require a Record of Evidence (ROE) to be completed (non-regulatory). A ROE outlining how DFO meets the requirements of the Fish Stocks Provisions section 6.1 with reference to applicable documents can be found in [Appendix 9](#).

Up to and including the 2013 return year, three CUs were determined to have an integrated WSP status of AMBER (Middle Fraser, Fraser Canyon, South Thompson) and two were determined to have an integrated status of AMBER/GREEN (Lower Thompson, North Thompson). An updated assessment using DFO's WSP rapid status approach combined with local expert input with data up to 2022 resulted in the assignment of GREEN status to four of the CUs (Lower Thompson, South Thompson, North Thompson, and Middle Fraser) and AMBER status to the Fraser Canyon CU. The Science Response report is available at:

<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/library-bibliotheque/4130276x.pdf> .

This assessment found that smolt-to-adult survival has improved gradually since its lowest point (0.001%) in 2003, averaging 1.5% from 2010-2019; this remains low relative to historical averages. Because the productivity is low, the sustainable harvest that can be expected from the SMU is also low relative to historical levels.

The *Conservation Strategy for Coho Salmon (Oncorhynchus kisutch), Interior Fraser River Populations* was published in 2006 (http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2007/dfo-mpo/Fs23-517-2007E.pdf) and contains the following recovery objectives:

Objective 1: The three-year average escapement in at least half of the sub-populations within each of the five populations is to exceed 1,000 wild-origin spawning Coho Salmon, excluding hatchery fish spawning in the wild. This represents a total Interior Fraser River Coho spawning escapement of 20,000 to 25,000 wild-origin Coho. This objective is designed to provide the abundance and diversity required to satisfy the recovery goal.

Objective 2: Maintain the productivity of Interior Fraser River Coho so that recovery can be sustained. This objective is designed to ensure that the threats to recovery are addressed. This objective may be met by addressing the causes for the decline that were identified by COSEWIC:

- Development of a harvest management plan to ensure that exploitation rates are appropriate to changes in productivity caused, for example, by fluctuations in ocean conditions.
- Identification, protection, and, if necessary, rehabilitation of important habitats.
- Ensure that the use of fish culture methods is consistent with the recovery.

The CSAS stock assessment advice from 2014 interpreted the above recovery objectives for Interior Fraser River Coho as follows:

Short-Term Objective 1: three-year geometric mean⁹ escapement in at least half of the subpopulations within each of the five CUs to exceed 1,000 natural spawners, excluding hatchery fish spawning in the wild; approximately 20,000 wild spawners.

Longer-Term Objective 1: three-year geometric mean escapement in all of the subpopulations within each of the five CUs to exceed 1,000 natural spawners, excluding hatchery fish spawning in the wild; approximately 40,000 wild spawners.

The implementation plan for the 2019 PST brings an opportunity to improve Coho assessment and management. The PST Chapter 5 Southern Coho management framework is based on

⁹ Using geometric means provides more precautionary generational averages and recognizes the concern (through heavier weighting) that smaller escapements may impact genetic diversity.

assessment of Interior Fraser River (IFR), Lower Fraser River (LFR), and Strait of Georgia (SoG) Coho SMUs into one of three status zones (Low, Moderate, and Abundant), which have commensurate total exploitation rate (ER) caps and sharing of this ER cap between the U.S. and Canada. Currently, only the IFR Coho SMU has an abundance-based approach in place for setting SMU status. To support the development of status information for Georgia Basin Coho, the Department previously implemented a limited retention opportunity for unmarked Coho. Marked and unmarked fish were sampled using new Parentage-Based Tagging (PBT) along with regular DNA to distinguish hatchery-origin Coho from natural-origin Coho within a management or assessment unit. These tools were applied using September fishery data from the northern Strait of Georgia and escapement information from ECVI hatcheries.

From 2020 to 2025, sampling was conducted through an assessment fishery approach. While sampling objectives were not met in any year, the program generated valuable genetic information, and ongoing analysis continues to improve understanding of impacts to unmarked stock groups rarely sampled in mark selective fisheries.

The Department reviewed the genetic data collected over the past five years of this project and has determined that these fisheries have very low impacts to IFR Coho. Therefore, the retention of unmarked (wild) Coho in portions of the northern Strait of Georgia (Areas 13, 14 and Subareas 15-2 to 15-6) will be permitted during recreational fisheries in the month of September.

13.3.2.2.1 Pre-season

The description of the forecast models used can be found in Simpson *et al.* (2004). The processes used have been modified annually based on model performance and development of new models, although the underlying methods are unchanged. Marine survival forecasts are derived for Big Qualicum, Quinsam, Inch Creek, and Robertson Hatchery stocks, and Black and Carnation Creek wild stocks. Abundance forecasts are derived for Interior Fraser and Thompson River aggregates, and selected aggregates from Areas 12 and 13.

Marine survival has trended differently in the Johnstone Strait (Area 12) and Northern Strait of Georgia. Returns in 2025 were above average to the Keogh River (Area 12 wild indicator) as well as the Quinsam and Black Creek indicators.. In 2025, the Keogh River indicator had an escapement of 3,263 , which is above the long-term average and 75th percentile for this system, whereas Black Creek saw an above average return of 5,181 adults and a record return of 8,662 jacks. Both systems had below average smolt counts in 2024, which suggests early marine conditions differ between Johnstone Strait and the Strait of Georgia. The smolt abundance for both systems in 2025 was above average, and we anticipate average to above average returns to both Black and Keogh Rivers in 2026 as a result. The anomalous jack return to Black Creek in

2025 will be of particular interest to the 2026 adult escapement as both will be from the spring 2025 ocean entry cohort.

Coho marine survivals for the 2025 adult cohort were below forecast. Coho marine survival forecasts for 2026 show a switch to a decrease in survival for Strait of Georgia, Lower Fraser and Interior Fraser systems and an increase for the South West Vancouver Island systems. The 2025 increase to marine survival for the Area 13 Aggregate and the decrease for the Area 12 Aggregate are forecast to continue in 2026.

Strait of Georgia Coho

The 2025 escapements in the Strait of Georgia were variable between systems. Systems to the north such as Puntledge were near the long-term average while Big Qualicum was well above average at more than 32,000. Southern rivers such as the Nanaimo and Englishman were above average. Smaller Coho systems were generally above to well above average including Black Creek, Little River, Shawnigan and Sliammon. A Coho mark-recapture enumeration project was initiated at Cowichan River in 2019. Data collected in 2025 produced a preliminary estimate of 16,752 adults which is below the six-year project average of 21,200 and less than the 26,593 estimated in 2024. Smolt production in 2025 at Black Creek was above average at nearly 100,000 coho which may have been a contributing factor to a record return of jacks in fall 2025. The hatchery indicator for the Area 13-North outlook unit is the Quinsam. In 2025, Quinsam saw above-average returns. For other monitored systems in the area, moderate variations in escapement were encountered but in general near or above forecasted returns were observed across the area.

Lower Fraser River Coho

The 2026 salmon outlook classifies Lower Fraser Coho as *data deficient* as currently there is no reference point or escapement time series. The Lower Fraser River Coho assessment project aimed at estimating abundance is planned to continue in 2026.

Interior Fraser River Coho

The 2026 salmon outlook classifies Interior Fraser River (IFR) Coho in the *cautious zone* (amber zone under the WSP). A 2014 CSAS paper determined that Interior Fraser River Coho have been in a low productivity (i.e., low survival rate) regime since 1994, and the published Science Advisory Report from the Recovery Potential Assessment for IFR Coho indicated this trend has continued through 2017 (DFO 2019). In relation to the Pacific Salmon Treaty reference points for IFR Coho, the escapement goal portion of the moderate aggregate SMU reference point has been met recently in each of 2023-2025 but not the survival portion. Smolt-to-adult survival was estimated at 2.1% in 2023, 3.1% in 2024, and 4.8% in 2025. To move into a moderate status category, the SMU needs to experience three years of consecutive survival above 3.0%.

Therefore, the SMU will remain in Low status for 2026-27. Sustained improvement in marine conditions will be required to improve outlook and rebuild abundance. The preliminary 2026 pre-fishery abundance forecast for IFR Coho is 101,500 with an 80% forecast range of 83,000 to 139,000.

In-season

At this time, there is no in-season assessment on Southern Inside Coho stocks, with the exception of some programs to assess local abundance in some terminal areas. In particular, in 2020, a collaborative pilot assessment project was initiated by DFO, LGL Ltd., and the Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance. The project aims to estimate Lower Fraser River Coho abundance through the deployment of an assessment fishery and the expansion of current and novel escapement programs. The assessment fishery is located on the mainstem of the Fraser River and is planned to operate in 2026.

13.3.2.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Annex IV, Chapter 5 of the Pacific Salmon Treaty establishes the international management regime for southern B.C. and southern U.S.-origin Coho based on the status of defined Management Units (SMUs) in each country. Each SMU is to be managed to constrain exploitation rates based on the status of the SMU, or groups of SMUs in the case of the U.S. Until such time as the Parties provide specific maximum exploitation rate targets for each SMU that originates within its jurisdiction consistent with attainment of maximum sustained harvest levels, Canada and the U.S. will manage their fisheries consistent with the maximum exploitation rate ranges for three status levels – *Low*, *Moderate* and *Abundant*.

Table 13–36: Pacific Salmon Treaty abundance-based exploitation rate limits on Coho Salmon stocks in fisheries harvesting Southern B.C. Coho.

	Low	Moderate	Abundant
Survival	$S \leq 0.03$	Three consecutive years $0.03 < S \leq 0.06$	Three consecutive years $S > 0.06$
		and	and
Escapement	Monitored in CUs and subpopulations but no thresholds	Three consecutive years: Half of subpopulations in each CU > 1,000; or Moderate Aggregate SMU escapement objective	Three consecutive years: All IFR subpopulations in each CU > 1,000; or Abundant Aggregate SMU escapement objective
ER cap (US/Can)	0.20 (0.10/0.10)	0.30 (0.12/0.18)	0.45 (0.15/0.30)

In addition, within the *Low* status zone, each country is expected to implement additional fishery management measures as may be necessary to address conservation needs for SMUs within its jurisdiction. For most years since 1998 (except 2014 and 2015), Canada has done this by planning on reducing its share of the total exploitation rate on IFR Coho to approximately 3% to 5% or less.

The Canadian Coho SMUs used by the PST under the Southern Coho management plan are:

- Lower Fraser River
- Interior Fraser River
- Strait of Georgia (the previous SMUs of SoG Vancouver Island and SoG Mainland have been combined)

Domestic Canadian Management

In response to large declines in total returns and escapements of IFR Coho in the 1990s, exploitation rates in Canadian fisheries were significantly reduced, and for many years, with the exception of 2014 and 2015, the maximum Canadian exploitation rate (ER) has been set at

3% to 5%. Since 1998, this level of exploitation has led to significant fisheries management restrictions for fisheries in times and areas where IFR Coho may be encountered. These management actions have generally ranged from non-retention of wild Coho to time and area closures. Non-retention or time and area closures may be in place in the following fisheries:

- West Coast Vancouver Island (WCVI) troll (commercial and First Nations) and recreational fisheries in offshore areas from June until early September;
- Commercial net and recreational fisheries in the Strait of Juan de Fuca from June until early October;
- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries in Johnstone and Queen Charlotte Strait from early June until late August;
- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries in the Strait of Georgia from June until early October;
- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries both off the mouth of, and in, the Fraser River from early June until mid-October; and,
- Commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries in the Fraser River upstream of Sawmill Creek from mid- to late September until late October.

Management measures for IFR Coho are generally in place from January to September when these populations are expected to be encountered in southern B.C. waters. These measures are expected to also limit impacts on other Southern Inside Coho populations.

For fishery planning purposes, IFR Coho fishing mortality is estimated pre-season using a variety of domestic models. Exploitation rates in the marine fisheries are estimated using a harvest rate spreadsheet model, which is based on the historical relationship between fishing effort and associated exploitation rates in the period 1986 to 1997 as determined from coded-wire tag recoveries of IFR Coho and release mortality rates as identified in the Southern BC Pacific Salmon Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP). FSC, commercial, and recreational impacts from the Fraser River mouth to Sawmill Creek are estimated using results from a decay model. Results are based on: the number of Coho encounters (kept and released) in fisheries directed on other species; the proportion of IFR to LFR Coho present in the river at the time of the particular fishery; and, release mortality rates as identified in the IFMP. Coho encountered in tributary and mainstem Fraser River fisheries upstream of Sawmill Creek are assumed to be 100% IFR Coho.

For the purpose of implementing the PST arrangements in the Annex 4 Coho Chapter, Canada works with the U.S. to estimate fishery impacts on southern B.C. Coho using a bilaterally-agreed Fisheries Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM). The FRAM model is used pre-season by the U.S. to plan fisheries within stock-specific constraints associated with SMU status as identified in the Agreement. FRAM-estimated impacts on IFR Coho may not match the

estimates projected by Canadian domestic models as FRAM is based on a shorter base period of CWT data (1986-1992, instead of 1986-1997 used in Canadian domestic models), impacts in Fraser River in-river fisheries are accounted for differently, and the model includes other impacts associated with natural and drop-out mortalities.

Post-season, FRAM reconstructs cohort abundance(s) to estimate fishery-stock-specific ERs. The post-season application of the FRAM model has been updated to incorporate Fraser River freshwater fisheries impacts (as of 2014), available non-terminal WCVI FSC catch (as of 2020), and available ECVI FSC catch (as of 2023).

Continuing in 2026, all Fraser fisheries will be subject to specific end dates first in place since 2022. There will be no fishing for salmon in the Fraser mainstem after November 30. Similarly, in tributaries where recreational Chinook and Coho-directed opportunities exist, there will be no fishing for Chum Salmon from December 1 to 31. FSC opportunities will continue to be provided in tributaries until December 31 for those First Nations with access to terminal areas. More information on fishery end dates are provided in Section 13.2.

Fraser River Fisheries

Within the Fraser River, a “window closure” has been the primary tool applied in First Nations, commercial, and recreational fisheries to protect IFR Coho from non-selective fishing gear (e.g., gill nets, rod and reel fishing with bait). Selective fishing gear (e.g., beach seines, modified shallow seines, rod and reel fishing with no bait, dip nets, fish wheels) has been allowed to proceed within these window closure dates. The window closure is implemented on subsequent dates in upstream areas of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, depending on when the peak migration of IFR Coho is expected to pass through each area.

In the past decade, with the exception of 2014, the start and end dates of the window closure have been selected to protect approximately 90% of the Interior Fraser River Coho migration from exposure to non-selective fishing gear, with adjustments made on an annual basis to initiate the closure period following the Labour Day weekend. The objective of protecting 90% of the run was developed when IFR Coho were in critically low status and was aligned with other domestic management measures to meet an overall domestic management objective of limiting the total Canadian exploitation rate on Interior Fraser River Coho to 3% to 5% or less.

New for 2026-2027: Since a precipitous decline in Coho survival in the 1990s, bycatch and fishery related incidental mortality of Interior Fraser River Coho have been the primary constraint on many fisheries. In response to this decline, Canada has implemented a management strategy based on maintaining a domestic target exploitation rate range of 3-5% on Interior Fraser River Coho. Under Chapter 5 of the Pacific Salmon Treaty, there is a 20% exploitation rate cap on IFR Coho when the stock is in low status, with both Canada and the

United States limited to 10% respectively. This arrangement is described in Chapter 5 of the Pacific Salmon Treaty, under the current Low status regime of Interior Fraser River Coho.

Sustained improvements in Interior Fraser River Coho status documented in recent scientific studies show that domestic ERs caps could be raised as high as the 10% as described in the Pacific Salmon Treaty, while still maintaining Interior Fraser River Coho populations above their limit reference point and in the Wild Salmon Policy amber or green zone. For more information see: [Interior Fraser River Coho \(*Oncorhynchus kisutch*\) Stock Assessment for 2022](#)

For the 2026 season, the Department plans to allow a small incremental increase the exploitation rate from the current limit of 3-5% to a limit of 7%, with a commitment to reviewing outcomes post-season. This will permit an incremental increase in incidental impacts on IFR Coho in First Nation food, social and ceremonial fisheries, as well as, commercial (including First Nations economic) fisheries targeting Fraser River Sockeye. A post-season review of preliminary information from these changes will be considered making any longer term decisions about adjustments to the exploitation rate limit. This approach is consistent with Canadian conservation objectives and Pacific Salmon Treaty requirements, while maintaining other key existing IFR Coho management measures (e.g. window closures, selective fishing requirements).

For 2026, the selective fishing window closure dates are identified below. During the times and areas specified below, fisheries will be closed for non-selective fishing gear, and only selective or limited experimental fisheries will be permitted.

Table 13–37: Window Closure Dates to protect Interior Fraser River Coho for non-selective fishing gear

Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10	September 8 to October 9
Fraser River - Below Mission	September 8 to October 9
Fraser River - Mission to Hope	September 10 to October 12
Fraser River - Hope to Sawmill Creek	September 12 to October 17
Fraser River - Sawmill Creek to Lytton	September 16 to December 31
Fraser River - Lytton to Williams Lake River	September 23 to December 31
Fraser River - Upstream of Williams Lake River	October 1 to December 31
Thompson River Downstream of the confluence of the North and South Thompson Rivers	September 23 to December 31
Thompson River Upstream of the confluence of the North and South Thompson Rivers	October 1 to December 31

13.3.2.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO SOUTHERN INSIDE COHO FISHERIES

All fisheries where IFR Coho are believed to be prevalent will be conducted with a non-retention restriction for unmarked Coho in place, except for an extremely limited number of FSC fisheries conducted in terminal areas by First Nations in Fraser River and Thompson River tributaries.

Fisheries for other salmon species will be managed taking into consideration the anticipated incidental mortalities of IFR Coho, which may result in reduced harvest opportunities for other salmon species.

Given ongoing declines in IFR Steelhead escapement and the assessment of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as *Endangered* by COSEWIC, DFO will again implement a rolling window closure throughout southern B.C. to help protect IFR Steelhead in 2026. Areas and dates for the window closure are identified in [Appendix 7](#).

13.3.2.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

Based on the IFR Coho management objective, the following status quo fishing plan considerations have been identified.

13.3.2.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food, Social and Ceremonial

Marine Waters

FSC fisheries for Southern Inside Coho in marine areas will not be affected by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

First Nations target local salmon stocks for FSC purposes throughout the Inner South Coast. Sockeye Salmon are a priority species for First Nations, but the overall objective expressed by many First Nations in consultation is to access a diversity of fishing opportunities throughout the season and across species. Coho Salmon make up part of that diversity.

2026 management measures include:

- Retention of wild Coho Salmon is permitted in portions of southern Queen Charlotte Sound, Queen Charlotte Strait, northern Johnstone Strait, and Mainland Inlets (Kingcome, Knight, and Bute).
- In other management areas of southern B.C. only Coho missing an adipose fin (with a healed over scar) may be retained.
- As part of an ongoing assessment of Georgia Basin Coho (13.3.2.2), the Department intends to allow retention of unmarked (wild) Coho in portions of the northern Strait of Georgia during FSC fisheries occurring in the month of September.

New for 2026-2027: DFO is modifying FSC restrictions to allow the retention of wild Coho in South Coast marine mixed-stock times/areas. This is in response to legal advice on the enforceability of the current measure which allows the retention of wild Coho which are dead after all attempts are made to release wild Coho alive and unharmed. The use of this type of measure in other FSC fisheries has been discontinued throughout the Pacific Region for several years. Furthermore, the modification is consistent with current treaty domestic fisheries and appropriately aligns FSC priority with right-based sale, recreational and commercial fisheries. This proposed modification is not expected to significantly change FSC fishing activity or

impacts on IFC. FSC harvests of wild Coho from southern mixed-stock marine time/areas have already been included in FRAM estimates of IFC ER for several years.

Non-tidal Waters (excluding Fraser River)

Some First Nations Coho-directed fisheries may occur in freshwater systems throughout Southern Inside waters subject to local abundance.

FSC fisheries for Coho in freshwater systems outside of the Fraser River system will not be affected by 2026 Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Fraser River

Due to recent trends of poor abundances of Fraser Coho stocks, there have been no First Nations fisheries in the lower Fraser River that target Coho Salmon (with the exception of terminal ESSR harvests in hatchery-enhanced systems). With the exception of 2014 and 2015, First Nations have been asked to release incidentally caught unmarked Coho Salmon alive and unharmed, where possible, prior to the end of the non-selective window closure dates.

Marked Coho Salmon may be retained for FSC purposes. Where applicable, First Nations may retain unmarked Coho Salmon for FSC purposes following the window closure dates noted above.

Directed harvest may be permitted in specific areas or terminal systems where abundance permits. These fisheries are generally for very small numbers of Coho. Fishing plans are discussed and agreed upon between DFO and the appropriate First Nations once Coho have begun to return to the area and terminal abundance sufficient to support some small-scale FSC harvest can be assessed.

FSC fisheries in the Fraser River, including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10, will be affected by the 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures. A 27-day rolling window closure will be applied to FSC fisheries according to the times and areas outlined in Table 13–38. These measures will not extend to marine FSC fisheries.

Table 13–38: Dates and Area for the Interior Fraser River Steelhead 27-day Rolling Closure for FSC Fisheries in the Fraser River system.

Fishery Location	Start	End
Area 29: 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10	26-Sep	22-Oct
Mouth to Port Mann Bridge	26-Sep	22-Oct
Port Mann Bridge to Mission	28-Sep	24-Oct
Mission to Hope	29-Sep	25-Oct
Hope to Sawmill Creek	3-Oct	29-Oct
Sawmill Creek to Lytton (Thompson Confluence)	5-Oct	31-Oct
Lytton to Texas Creek	8-Oct	3-Nov
Texas Creek to Kelly Creek	10-Oct	5-Nov
Kelly Creek to Deadman Creek	13-Oct	8-Nov
Deadman Creek to Chilcotin River	16-Oct	11-Nov
Chilcotin River	19-Oct	14-Nov
Thompson River – Thompson Confluence to Bonaparte	8-Oct	3-Nov
Thompson River – Bonaparte River to Kamloops Lake	12-Oct	7-Nov

Refer to Table 10–1 in Southern B.C./Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

DFO is working with the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) Nation to implement the BC Supreme Court's declaration of an Aboriginal right to fish for food in the south arm of the Fraser River.

Mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce disturbance to Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within Southern B.C. waters and key foraging areas within the Swiftsure Bank area, Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Gulf Islands and near the mouth of the Fraser River. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under this licence, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by this vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where

in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Fraser River and Tributaries

In the Fraser River watershed, catch monitoring programs are managed through Activity Funding or Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements.

In the lower Fraser River (below Sawmill Creek), monitoring programs implemented typically include landing site or vessel-based collection of catch and effort information paired with validation of effort by vessel patrols or overflights. Specific focus has been placed on sampling of Chinook and Coho salmon for mark rate information and coded-wire tags (CWTs) to support the Salmon Head Recovery Program. Catch reports are received by DFO from catch monitoring programs on a weekly basis, within 48 hours of a fishery closing.

For fisheries above Sawmill Creek, catch monitoring programs range from basic census type to more enhanced programs that include collecting effort and catch rate information in creel sample programs.

Treaty Fisheries

Treaty fisheries targeting Coho within the Fraser River (including Areas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10) will be subject to closures to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead as outlined in Table 13–38. These measures do not extend to marine Treaty fisheries.

Tsawwassen First Nation Fisheries (Domestic)

As per the Tsawwassen First Nation Fisheries Operation Guidelines (TFN FOG), each year the Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) will develop a Tsawwassen First Nation Annual Fishing Plan (TFN AFP) for the harvest of salmon as per the Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement (TFN FA). The Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement is available online at: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100022706/1617737111330>

The Treaty outlines that in any year, the TFN Allocation for Coho Salmon is an amount of Fraser River Coho Salmon that will result in an annual average harvest of 500 Fraser River Coho Salmon and will be harvested a) incidentally in fisheries that target other species; or b) using selective harvesting techniques to capture specific Coho stocks.

The monitoring program for TFN Domestic fisheries includes fisher logs supplemented by validations of catch through on-water patrols and/or observations of landings and effort through on-water patrols. Details of monitoring programs in place can be found in the TFN FOG.

Tla'amin Nation Fisheries (Domestic)

The Domestic allocations for salmon under the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjɪnxʷegəs) for Coho are as follows:

In any year, the Tla'amin Fish Allocation for Coho Salmon is:

Non-terminal Coho

A number of Coho Salmon equal to 2.1% of the total amount of Coho Salmon, as determined by the Minister, harvested by all other mixed-stock Coho fisheries in Management Area 15.

Terminal Coho

A number of Coho Salmon equal to 25% of the Available Terminal Harvest for Coho Salmon stocks that originate from a Terminal Harvest Area, if the Minister determines that there is an Available Terminal Harvest for those stocks.

Tla'amin Nation and DFO have collaborated on the development of Biologically Based Benchmarks for selected terminal salmon populations in PFMA 15, which have informed updated escapement goals and associated harvest management approaches. These changes will be implemented beginning in 2026, with the harvest management frameworks subject to ongoing review in future years.

The Tla'amin Nation provides catch reports to the Department through the Aboriginal Harvest Management System (AHMS). The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing time period, location of harvest, harvest count by species, harvest effort, and biological samples.

13.3.2.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

Conservation measures to protect Coho will be in place in a number of areas and times.

Marine Waters

Recreational fisheries for Coho in marine areas will not be affected by the 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures.

Marine recreational fishing opportunities for inside Coho take place in Johnstone Strait (Areas 11 to 13), the Strait of Georgia (Areas 13 to 19) and Juan de Fuca Strait (Areas 19 to 20). Inside Coho fishing opportunities in the South Coast are largely dependent on the stock status of IFR Coho and Strait of Georgia Coho, and fishing opportunities are based on minimizing impacts on wild Coho with opportunities for retention of hatchery-marked Coho. Wild Coho retention opportunities are provided in Areas 19 and 20 beginning in October, after IFR Coho are considered to have migrated through the area. Marine recreational Coho fisheries are typically

open from June 1 to December 31, and updates are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website: <http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>.

Normal limits are two (2) per day for hatchery-marked Coho in most areas. Wild retention and increased daily limits may be considered in some terminal areas of the South Coast where fisheries are targeting local Coho stocks. In non-tidal waters, Coho retention is permitted based on observed abundances and escapement targets being met. These occur mainly in hatchery systems.

Anglers must release with the least amount of harm any fish caught that may not legally be retained; when releasing a fish, anglers must immediately return it to the water where it was caught.

Wild Coho opportunities may be permitted consistent with pre-2014 management measures with greater restrictions in place than in 2014 and 2015; changes to fishery management actions will be announced by Fishery Notice.

New for 2026-2027: The Department will allow the retention of unmarked (wild) Coho in portions of the northern Strait of Georgia (Areas 13 and 14, and Subareas 15-2 to 15-6) during recreational fisheries in the month of September. After several years of the Northern Strait of Georgia Coho Assessment Fishery proceeding (2021 to 2025), genetic analysis indicates very low impact to IFR Coho.

Fraser River and Tributaries

Recreational fishing for Coho will be closed in the tidal waters of the Fraser River and in non-tidal waters of the Fraser River mainstem in Region 2 from January 1 at least until the end of the IFR Steelhead window closure. Additionally, in this same area, there will be a ban on using bait while fishing for salmon after the IFR Steelhead window closure ends, see [Appendix 7](#) for more information.

For 2026, IFR Steelhead conservation measures will again be in effect in the Fraser River recreational fishery following the Coho window closure. A 42-day rolling window closure will be in effect according to the times and areas outlined in Table 13–39.

Table 13–39: Interior Fraser River Steelhead Rolling Window Closure Dates for the Fraser River Recreational Fishery

Fishery Location	Start	End
Area 29: 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10	19-Sep	30-Oct
Mouth to Port Mann Bridge	19-Sep	30-Oct
Port Mann Bridge to Mission	21-Sep	1-Nov
Mission to Hope	22-Sep	2-Nov
Hope to Sawmill Creek	26-Sep	6-Nov
Sawmill Creek to Lytton (Thompson Confluence)	28-Sep	8-Nov
Lytton to Texas Creek	1-Oct	11-Nov
Texas Creek to Kelly Creek	3-Oct	13-Nov
Kelly Creek to Deadman Creek	6-Oct	16-Nov
Deadman Creek to Chilcotin River	9-Oct	19-Nov
Chilcotin River	12-Oct	22-Nov
Thompson River – Thompson Confluence to Bonaparte	1-Oct	11-Nov
Thompson River – Bonaparte River to Kamloops Lake	5-Oct	15-Nov

In the tidal waters of the Fraser River and as in recent years, the non-tidal waters downstream of Hope in Region 2, opportunities for hatchery-marked Coho may be provided after the IFR Steelhead closure. The start date of this opportunity will be the day immediately following the IFR Steelhead closure when there is a high probability (>90%) that the Fraser River Terminal Run size for Fraser Chum will exceed 500,000, based on the in-season estimate. A bait ban will be in place.

Opportunities on tributaries to the Fraser River may be provided in those systems where hatchery production can support a Coho fishery, and where IFR Steelhead will not be impacted.

Continuing for 2026-27: Due to concerns regarding the impacts of non-compliance activities on non-target stocks and species, including stocks of concern, within portions of the Chilliwack/Vedder River in recent years, the Department will consider implementing in-season area-time closures within this river system to offer protection to co-migrating Sockeye Salmon.

In Regions 3, 5A, 7 and 8, there are no recreational fisheries that target Coho. Fisheries for other species may be limited after September 16 if they are expected to have impacts on co-migrating Coho.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast Stock Assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

Fraser River and Tributaries

Creel surveys are conducted in portions of the lower Fraser River and select tributaries to estimate recreational catch and effort for the times and areas surveyed. Typically, the creel survey in the lower Fraser River mainstem begins when the mainstem is opened to recreational salmon fishing; however, over the last number of years, the survey end date has been variable (mid-September to end of November). The creel surveys conducted on the Chilliwack River and Nicomen-Norrish recreational fisheries have remained stable over the last number of years both in times and areas (Chilliwack is surveyed from mid-September to mid-November and Nicomen-Norrish is surveyed from early October to the end of November).

The catch monitoring program in the Fraser watershed upstream of Alexandria will range from no monitoring to fisher-reported catch to highly intensive creel surveys. The expected effort and catch in a fishery, harvest rate, potential bycatch, and any biological sampling requirements will be taken into account when planning the catch monitoring program.

13.3.2.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

Commercial fisheries are managed to avoid impacts to Southern Inside Coho. Generally, all Coho caught incidentally during fisheries targeting other species must be released in a manner that causes the least harm. Estimates of release mortality are calculated post-season. Fisheries targeting other salmon species may be constrained if potential impacts to IFR Coho cannot be reduced to an acceptable level.

Allocation

Table 13–40: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
Southern Inside Coho	11 to 20, 29	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Notes on Coho allocations (south):

TBD: currently no Coho-directed fisheries in this area. Will be reviewed should future directed opportunities develop.

Southern Inside Coho Commercial Fisheries

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

Area B Seine

There are no directed Southern Inside Coho fisheries and Coho non-retention is in place in fisheries directed at other species.

Area D Gill Net

There are no directed Southern Inside Coho fisheries and Coho non-retention is in place in fisheries directed at other species.

Area E Gill Net

There are no directed Southern Inside Coho fisheries. During the times specified in 13.2-2, fishing will be restricted to limited selective and/or demonstration fisheries only. To protect IFR Steelhead, gill net demonstration fisheries will be subject to a 42-day rolling window closure as identified in [Appendix 7](#). The retention of Coho bycatch during fisheries directed on other species may not be permitted.

Area H Troll

There are no directed Southern Inside Coho fisheries and Coho non-retention is in place in fisheries directed at other species.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch and release information for all commercial fisheries.

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the Conditions of Licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

Southern Inside Coho Demonstration Fisheries

There are no demonstration fisheries targeting Southern Inside Coho.

Southern Inside First Nations Commercial Coho Harvest

There is no First Nations commercial harvest targeting Southern Inside Coho.

Harvest Agreements

There are no harvest agreements for Coho-directed fisheries on Southern Inside Coho. Harvest Agreements typically include provisions for fishing under the same or comparable rules as commercial fisheries operating in the same areas.

Economic Opportunities

There are no economic opportunity fisheries targeting Southern Inside Coho.

13.3.2.5.4 Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirement Fisheries

ESSR fisheries may occur at hatchery facilities that have a surplus of returning hatchery Coho. In past years, ESSR fisheries for Southern Inside Coho have taken place at:

- Big Qualicum Hatchery
- Nanaimo River Hatchery
- Chapman Creek Hatchery
- Capilano Hatchery
- Chehalis Hatchery

- Chilliwack Hatchery
- Inch Creek Hatchery
- Puntledge River Hatchery
- Quinsam River Hatchery

13.3.3 WCVI COHO

13.3.3.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT



Figure 13–19: Conservation Units within the WCVI Coho Management Unit

WCVI Coho originate from streams along the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Three major hatchery facilities, including Nitinat (Area 22), Conuma (Area 25), Robertson (Area 23), as well as production from smaller enhancement facilities also contribute to Coho returns. Coho harvest opportunities for these populations are provided for First Nations, recreational and commercial fisheries in inshore waters depending on local abundance.

13.3.3.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.3.3.2.1 Pre-season

In the 2026 Preliminary Salmon Outlook, WCVI Coho was classified as ‘Near Average’ based on data available as of December 2025. However, based on forecasted marine survival of Robertson Creek Hatchery (RBT) Coho and of Carnation Creek wild Coho, the RBT and Carnation Creek indicators are both forecasting a “Low” marine survival status. The best-performing marine survival for RBT (brood 2023, ocean-entry year 2025, returning 2026) is forecasting 6.5%, a decrease relative to the 2025 observed (7.8%) and above the 2025 forecast (5.1%). The marine survival for the wild indicator at Carnation Creek is forecast to be 1.0%, below the 2025 observed (1.5%) and slightly above the 2025 forecast (0.9%).

The forecasts are based on relationships between trends in survival and ocean environmental indicators during the ocean entry years. The best performing forecast model for RBT was the NPGO Dynamic Regression ARIMA model. The best forecast model for Carnation Creek was the SST Dynamic Regression ARIMA model.

13.3.3.2.2 In-season

At this time, there is no in-season assessment of abundance done on WCVI Coho stocks.

New for 2026-2027: Decision metrics and escapement targets for in-season management of unmarked Coho on the Sproat and Stamp rivers and freshwater portion of the Somass River are in development and are intended to improve in-season response to wild Coho returns on these systems.

13.3.3.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Fisheries taking place in offshore waters (Areas 121 and 123 to 127) are constrained by Interior Fraser River Coho decision guideline.

Fisheries taking place in near shore waters (Areas 23 to 27) are managed based on pre-season qualitative forecasts of returns to the area. Management is based on categorical status of the forecasted marine survival. The survival benchmarks defining each status level are based on data from the 1996 brood year to present for Robertson Creek Hatchery and from 1999 to present for Carnation Creek. Survival benchmarks are as follows:

- Critical status = 1st quartile, bottom 25% of the data;
- Low status = 2nd quartile, or in the range 25-50% of the data;
- Moderate status = 3rd quartile, or in the range 50-75% of the data;
- Abundant status = 4th quartile, or in the range 75-100% of the data.

A combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within southern BC waters and key foraging areas within the Swiftsure Bank area, Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Gulf Islands and near the mouth of the Fraser River. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

13.3.3.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO WCVI COHO FISHERIES

All commercial and recreational fisheries where Interior Fraser River (IFR) Coho are known to be prevalent will be conducted with a non-retention restriction for unmarked Coho.

Fisheries for other salmon species will be managed taking into consideration the anticipated incidental mortalities of IFR Coho, resulting in many cases, in reduced harvest opportunities for other salmon species until such time as IFR Coho are assumed to have migrated out of the area.

Given ongoing declines in IFR Steelhead escapement and the designation of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as *Endangered* by COSEWIC, DFO is continuing implementation of a rolling window closure throughout southern BC to protect IFR Steelhead. Areas and dates for the window closure are identified in [Appendix 7](#).

13.3.3.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.3.3.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food Social and Ceremonial

FSC fisheries for WCVI Coho will not be affected by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

New for 2026-2027: Wild (un-marked) Coho will be permitted to be retained (i.e. mortally-wounded licence condition for wild Coho eliminated) for FSC fisheries in offshore portions of the WCVI.

Bycatch or incidental retention may be permitted during fisheries for abundant species or stocks. Directed harvest may be permitted in specific areas or terminal systems where abundance permits.

5.4 Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. If a commercial vessel is used for fishing under this licence, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by the vessel to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours of the landing of fish harvested from that vessel. Catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Treaty Fisheries

Treaty fisheries for WCVI Coho will not be affected by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Maa-nulth Fisheries (Domestic)

Each year, the Maa-nulth Fish Allocation for Coho Salmon is a) an amount of Ocean Coho Salmon equal to 7,000 pieces; and b) An amount of Terminal Coho Salmon equal to:

- 1,200 pieces, when the return of Terminal Coho Salmon is critical;
- 1,850 pieces, when the return of Terminal Coho Salmon is low;
- 3,050 pieces, when the return of Terminal Coho Salmon is moderate; and
- 3,630 pieces, when the return of Terminal Coho Salmon is abundant.

The Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement outlines the steps required to trigger a Coho Salmon allocation re-negotiation and these conditions have been met. Maa-nulth has made the official request to Canada to re-negotiate their domestic Coho Salmon allocation and negotiations are currently underway.

The Maa-nulth First Nations provide electronic catch reports to the Department. The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing dates, location of harvest, species harvested, harvest effort, and catch (in pieces).

Five Nations (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht / Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations) Multi-species Fishery

The five Nations Multi-species fishery will not be affected by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures. Offshore WCVI conservation measures for IFR Coho will be a part of pre-season planning discussions¹⁰.

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island - Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined fishing territories and to sell that fish. For further information please see Section 10.3.1.

¹⁰ Five Nations have proposed to retain for sale both wild and hatchery Coho (currently only hatchery prior to September 15) from their offshore WCVI salmon fisheries with DNA/CWT sampling.

13.3.3.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

Marine recreational fisheries targeting outside Coho take place in inshore and offshore waters of the west coast of Vancouver Island (Areas 21 to 27, 121 to 127). Outside Coho fishing opportunities are largely dependent on the stock status of IFR Coho and WCVI Coho, and fishing opportunities are largely based on minimizing impacts on wild Coho and target mark-selective fishing for hatchery-marked Coho. Management measures are often required in order to meet conservation objectives for IFR Coho, and include non-retention of wild Coho in many areas in the South Coast at certain times of the year when they are vulnerable to fisheries. Offshore WCVI conservation measures for IFR Coho will be a part of pre-season planning discussions.

Marine recreational Coho fisheries typically operate June 1-Dec 31, and updates are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website: <http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>.

Recreational WCVI Coho management measures outlined in the 2025/26 Southern BC Salmon IFMP remain in effect until the publication of the 2026-27 IFMP, unless otherwise announced via Fishery Notice.

Normal limits are 2 per day and 4 in possession for hatchery-marked fish in offshore areas, and 2 per day and 4 in possession for unmarked or hatchery-marked fish in most inshore areas. Increased daily limits are permitted in some inshore areas on the west coast of Vancouver Island where fisheries are targeting local hatchery Coho production. In non-tidal waters, Coho retention is permitted based on observed abundances, escapement targets being met and primarily occurs in hatchery enhanced systems.

5.4 Coho produced by the Nitinat River (Area 22), Robertson Creek (Area 23) and Conuma River (Area 25) hatcheries are all marked with adipose fin clips. Increased daily limits (e.g. 4/day) for hatchery marked Coho may be provided in some terminal portions of these areas during the part of the season when these fish are expected to be present while daily limits for wild Coho may be lower (e.g. 1/day) in these areas.

WCVI wild Coho returns in 2026 are expected to be "low". This will allow for limited wild retention opportunities in inshore areas of the WCVI and zero wild retention opportunities in non-tidal waters.. Adjustments to wild retention limits may occur in-season on the Stamp River and freshwater portion of the Somass River in response to in-season information used to inform the ongoing development of decision metrics and escapement targets for these systems. Offshore measures remain in place to protect wild Interior Fraser River Coho stocks.

Continuing from 2024, a finfish closure on the Somass River at the mouth of McCoy Creek will take effect October 1 to 31 to protect local Coho stocks. Continuing from 2025, a finfish closure

in the Alberni Inlet at the mouth of Owatchet Creek (Dry Creek) will take effect October 1 to 31 to protect local Coho stocks.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

13.3.3.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

Allocation

Table 13-41: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Outside	21 to 27, 121 to 127	9.5%	9.5%	1.0%	80.0% ^b	0.0%

Notes on Coho allocations (south):

^b Coho taken primarily in offshore fisheries

WCVI Commercial Coho Fisheries

Given ongoing declines in IFR Steelhead escapement and the designation of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as *Endangered* by COSEWIC, DFO is implementing a rolling window closure throughout southern BC to protect IFR Steelhead. Areas and dates for the window closure are identified in [Appendix 7](#).

Area B Seine

No directed offshore Coho fisheries. Near shore fisheries may permit bycatch retention in fisheries targeting other species based on pre-season forecasts of abundance. Coho-directed fisheries may be permitted in terminal locations on enhanced stocks.

Area D Gill Net

No directed offshore Coho fisheries. Near shore fisheries may permit bycatch retention in fisheries targeting other species based on pre-season forecasts of abundance. Coho-directed fisheries may be permitted in terminal locations on enhanced stocks.

Area E Gill Net

No directed offshore Coho fisheries. Near shore fisheries may permit bycatch retention in fisheries targeting other species based on pre-season forecasts of abundance.

5.4 Area G Troll

Management measures to protect stocks of concern, including IFR Coho will constrain WCVI fisheries in the offshore area. However, there may be potential opportunities available for retention of Coho (hatchery marked or hatchery marked and wild) bycatch during directed Chinook fisheries. The 27-day rolling window closure will continue to be applied to the Area G troll fishery to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead. Areas and dates for this window closure are listed in Section 13.1.2.

5.4 Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information for all commercial fisheries.

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest or electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the Conditions of Licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

WCVI Coho Demonstration Fisheries

There are no proposed demonstration fisheries that meet the essential CSAF criteria targeting WCVI Coho.

Economic Opportunities

Potential Area 23 Economic Opportunity Coho fisheries will not be affected by Interior Fraser River Steelhead conservation measures.

Economic opportunity fisheries may be conducted under agreements that specify provisions for planning fisheries, allocations, catch reporting requirements as well as roles and responsibilities regarding the management of the fishery. Economic Opportunity agreements are anticipated to be in place with the Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations for the 2026 season. The Department’s general approach is that Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities are managed using the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery. Indigenous commercial harvest opportunities may be implemented with different times, areas, gears and regulations consistent with the overall management approach for the commercial fishery. These economic opportunity fisheries are based on local abundances, estimated by the Salmon Outlook and in-season information if available.

13.3.3.5.4 ESSR Fisheries

ESSR fisheries may occur at DFO hatchery facilities that have a surplus of returning hatchery Coho. These fishery opportunities are provided to the local First Nations. In past years, ESSR fisheries have taken place at the Roberson Creek Hatchery and Nitinat Hatchery. Additionally there is the potential for a Surplus to Escapement fishery on Conuma Coho for the five Nations.

13.4 SOUTHERN PINK SALMON FISHING PLAN

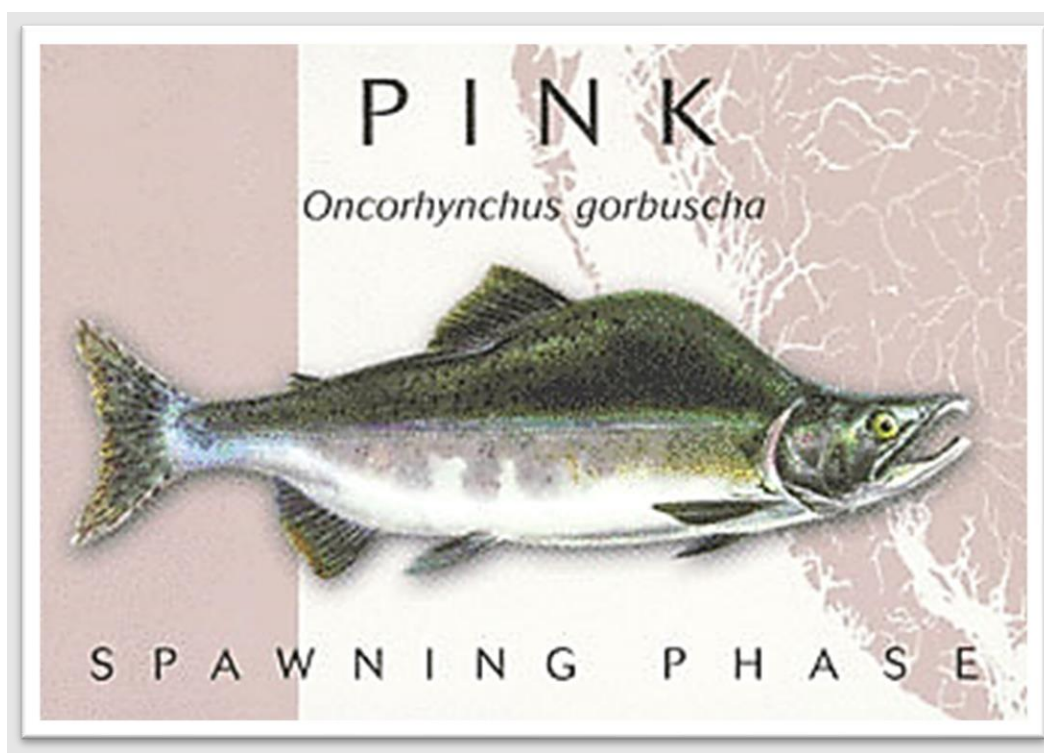
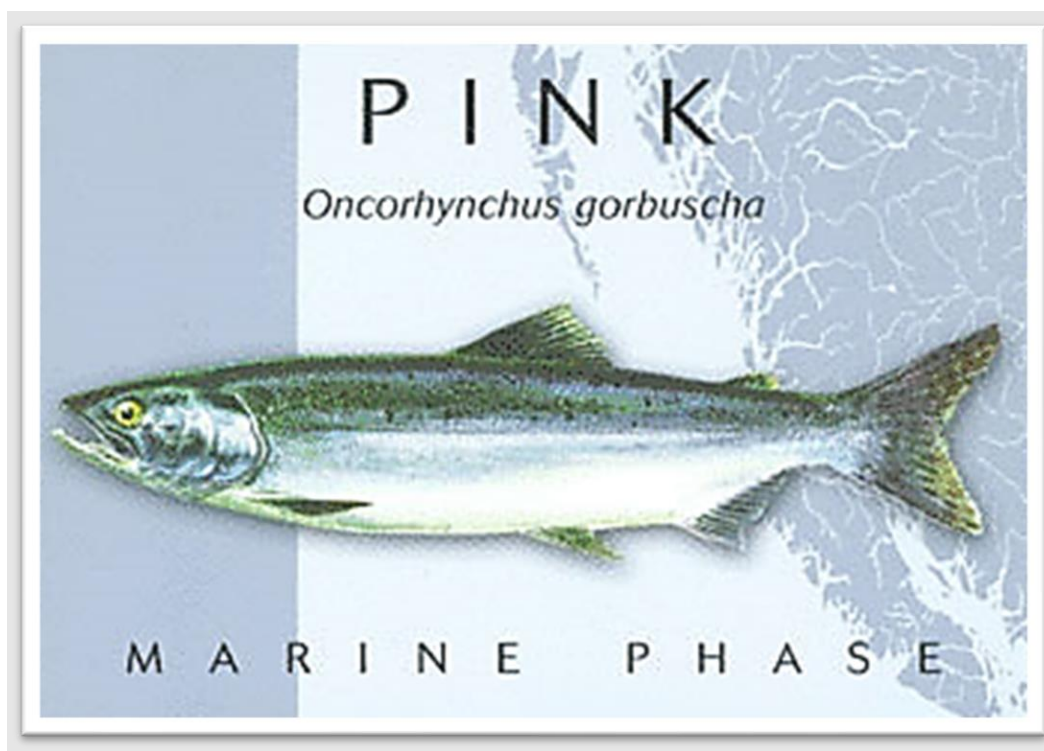


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13.4.1 SOUTHERN PINK - OVERVIEW

In southern BC, Pink Salmon stocks are found primarily in tributaries of the Fraser River and in streams on the East Coast of Vancouver Island and the Mainland. Pink returns on the WCVI are small and are not actively managed. Most Pink fisheries in Southern BC target Fraser River origin Pink Salmon in odd years; Pink harvests in other areas primarily occur near terminal areas. Detailed information is provided below outlining management of Fraser River, ECVI and Mainland populations.

Information on smaller WCVI Pink populations is under development and further information will be provided in a subsequent year.

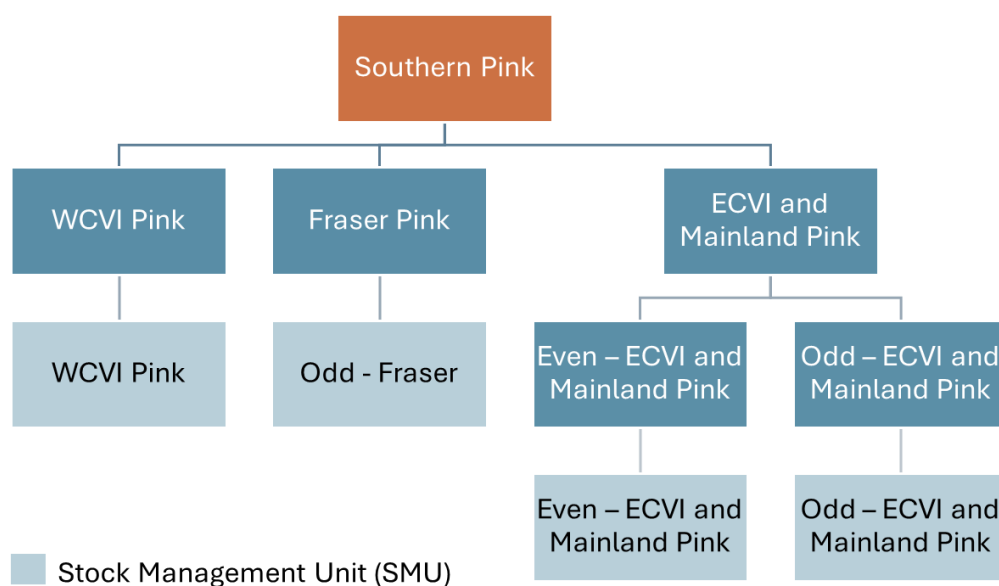


Figure 13–20: Overview of Southern Pink Salmon

13.4.1.1 SOUTHERN PINK SALMON ENHANCEMENT INFORMATION

The major DFO operation enhancement facilities that produce Pinks are:

South Coast Area:

Quinsam River hatchery

Fraser River Area (*odd year run only*):

Capilano River hatchery

Chehalis River hatchery

Tenderfoot Creek hatchery

Weaver Spawning Channel

SEP Production Plans and Post-Season Production Data

The following website contains links to summaries of the most recent years' Post-Season Production from DFO and DFO-partnered hatcheries, as well as the current version of the SEP Production Plan. Note that from February to June each year the Production Plan is in draft form and is subject to change. From June to the following February, the Final Production Plan is available.

[IFMP SEP Data Tables | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ifmp-sep-data-tables/pacific-region/fisheries-and-oceans-canada)

13.4.1.2 SOUTHERN PINK - SEP PROPOSALS OR UPDATES FOR 2026

13.4.1.3 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

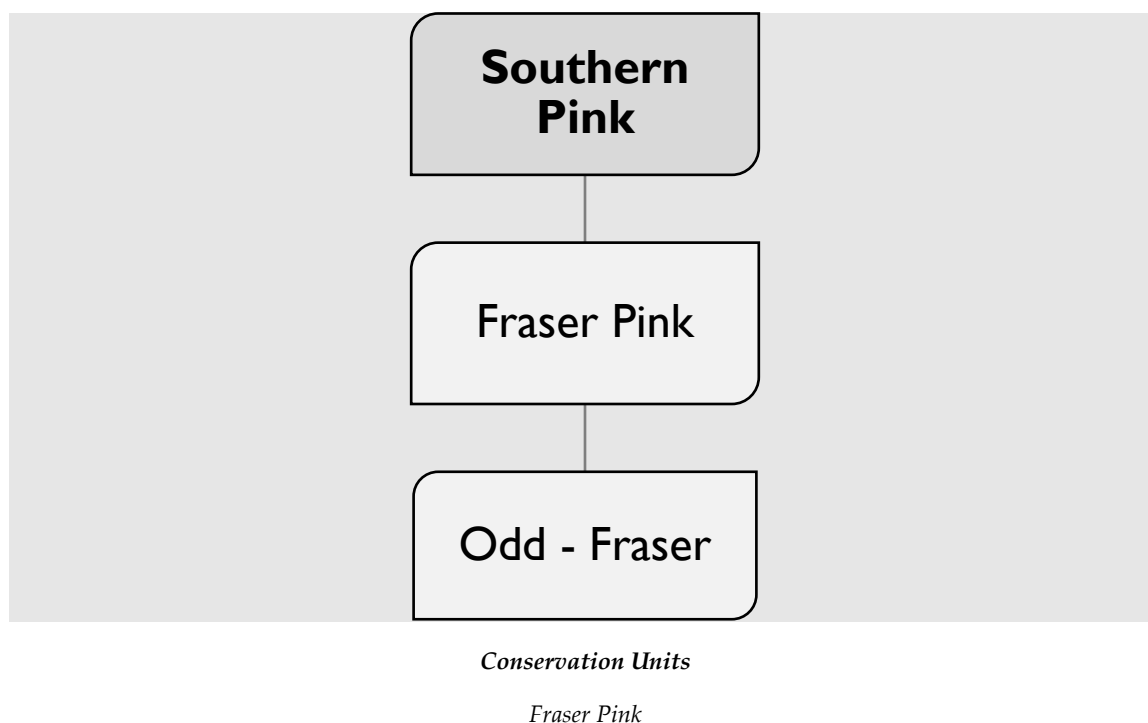


Figure 13–21: Conservation Units in the Fraser Pink Salmon Management Unit (1 CU)

Fraser Pink Salmon migrate up the Fraser system from early August through early October, peaking in early to mid-September. Returns occur on a two-year cycle, almost entirely in odd-numbered calendar years only. Minimal numbers of Fraser River Pink Salmon return in even years and no directed harvest occurs in these years.

13.4.1.4 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.4.1.4.1 Pre-season

In even-numbered years, there are very few returns of Pink Salmon and a stock outlook is not done. A stock outlook and formal Fraser River Pink run size forecast are produced in odd-numbered years.

13.4.1.4.2 In-season

In even years, there is no in-season assessment for Fraser River Pink Salmon.

In odd years, assessment of Fraser Pink run size is conducted by the Pacific Salmon Commission. Estimates of abundance, run timing, stock composition, and other technical information are used to assess potential fishing opportunities relative to pre-season fishing plans.

13.4.1.5 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Prior to each fishing season, the Fraser Pink Salmon Decision Guidelines are used to develop the spawning escapement plan (Table 13–42). A pre-season fishing plan is then developed by DFO and the Fraser River Panel (FRP) that takes into consideration conservation concerns for other species, pre-season forecasts of abundance, timing, and diversion rate.

In even years, there are no fisheries planned to directly target Fraser Pink Salmon.

In odd years, Pink Salmon are managed to the decision guidelines in the table below.

Table 13–42: Fraser Pink Salmon Odd Year Decision Guidelines

Run Size	Escapement Plan
Less than 7.059 M	The allowable exploitation rate (ER) increases linearly from zero percent at a run size of zero to 15% at a run size of 7.059M. (For run sizes less than 7.059M, the allowable % ER is the run size expressed in millions multiplied by (15%/7.059))
between 7.059M & 20M	The allowable ER increases from 15% to 70%. The escapement goal is 6M, the remainder is harvestable surplus.
Greater than 20M	The allowable ER is 70%. The escapement goal increases as the run size increases beyond 20M.

13.4.1.6 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO FRASER PINK FISHERIES

Even year Fraser Pink returns are extremely low and fisheries are not planned to target directly on the stock

Harvest of Fraser Pink Salmon in odd years may be constrained by the management objectives for Fraser Sockeye and for other species of concern, particularly Interior Fraser (IFR) Coho Salmon and Steelhead. In some cases, full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

13.4.1.7 ALLOCATIONS AND FISHING PLANS

In-season information including estimates of abundance, run timing, stock composition, and other technical information are used to assess potential fishing opportunities relative to pre-season fishing plans.

The Fraser River Panel meets regularly from early July to mid-September to review information as it becomes available over the course of the Sockeye and Pink migrations. In-season information including fishery openings are posted on the Internet regularly throughout the fishing season by the DFO and the PSC at the following websites:

Weekly PSC News Release:

http://www.psc.org/news_frpnews.htm

Aboriginal, Commercial and Recreational Fishery Notices:

<http://www-ops2.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>

13.4.1.7.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food, Social and Ceremonial Fisheries

First Nations target local salmon stocks for FSC purposes throughout the South Coast. Catches are typically higher in odd years when Fraser River Pinks are on their dominant cycle year. Minimal Pink catch is thought to occur in even years.

First Nations opportunities to harvest salmon for FSC purposes is provided through communal licences issued by DFO. Refer to Table 10–1 for Southern B.C./Fraser River First Nations Fisheries. FSC fisheries will be planned to maximize the use of selective gear types and reduce bycatch where possible.

DFO is working with the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) Nation to implement the BC Supreme Court's declaration of an Aboriginal right to fish for food in the south arm of the Fraser River.

To support IFR Steelhead conservation, a rolling window closure will apply to all FSC salmon fisheries in the Fraser River within the times and areas identified in Table 13–38 (including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10) and in [Appendix 7](#). This closure does not extend to marine FSC fisheries targeting Fraser Pink Salmon.

In some cases, full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

In addition to these FSC fisheries, local First Nations access Pink Salmon through ESSR harvests at several hatchery facilities (refer to Section 13.4.1.7.7).

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under this licence, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by this vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Fraser River and Tributaries

First Nations catch monitoring programs are managed through Activity Funding or Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements.

In the lower Fraser River (below Sawmill Creek), monitoring programs implemented vary between Nations but typically include landing site or vessel-based collection of catch and effort information paired with validation of effort by vessel patrols or overflights. Catch reports are received by DFO from catch monitoring programs on a weekly basis, within 48 hours of a fishery closing.

For fisheries in the Fraser watershed above Sawmill Creek, catch monitoring programs typically range from basic census type to more enhanced programs that include collecting effort and catch rate information in creel sample programs.

Treaty Fisheries

Treaty fisheries will be planned to maximize the use of selective gear types and reduce bycatch where possible.

In some cases, full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season. See Section 13.4.1.6 for information on incidental harvest, bycatch and constraints to Fraser Pink fisheries.

To support IFR Steelhead conservation, a rolling window closure will apply to all Treaty salmon fisheries in the Fraser River within the times and areas identified in Table 13–38 (including sub-Areas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10) and [Appendix 7](#). This closure does not extend to marine Treaty fisheries targeting Fraser Pink Salmon.

Tsawwassen Fisheries (Domestic)

In any year, the Tsawwassen Fishing Right Allocation for Pink Salmon will be that number of fish caught incidentally in the harvest of Tsawwassen Allocation for Sockeye Salmon, up to a maximum of 2,500 Fraser River Pink Salmon.

The monitoring program for Tsawwassen Domestic fisheries includes fisher logs supplemented by validations of catch through on-water patrols and/or observations of landings and effort through on-water patrols. Details of monitoring programs in place can be found in the Tsawwassen Fisheries Operational Guidelines.

Tla'amin (Domestic)

The Domestic allocation for Pink Salmon under the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjɪnɣʷegəs) is as follows:

In any year, the Tla'amin Fish Allocation for Pink Salmon is a maximum of 5,000 Pink Salmon. The allocation will be determined by an abundance-based formula.

The Tla'amin Nation provides catch reports to the Department through the Aboriginal Harvest Management System (AHMS). The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing time period, location of harvest, harvest count by species, harvest effort, and biological samples.

Maa-nulth (Domestic)

The Maa-nulth Domestic allocation for Pink Salmon under the Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement are in each two-year period following the effective date of the Agreement (2009): a maximum of 7,250 Pink Salmon (some or all of which may be Fraser Pink).

The Maa-nulth First Nations provide electronic catch reports to the Department.. The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing dates, location of harvest, species harvested, harvest effort, and catch (in pieces).

Five Nations (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht / Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations) Multi-species Fishery

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island – Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined fishing territories and to sell that fish. For further information please see Section 10.3.1.

The five Nations Multi-species fishery for Fraser River Pink Salmon will not be affected by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures.

13.4.1.7.2 Recreational Fisheries

In most south coast tidal waters, the daily limit in recreational fisheries is four (4) Pink Salmon . Marine recreational Pink fisheries typically take place in August and September. Updates are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website:

<http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>.

In some cases, recreational fisheries may be reduced or closed due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season. See Section 13.4.1.6 for information on incidental harvest, bycatch and constraints to Fraser Pink fisheries.

Non-tidal, Fraser River opportunities may be anticipated for Fraser River Pink Salmon in odd numbered years and fishing decisions will be dependent on in-season information, including constraints due to co-migrating species of concern. No Fraser River opportunities are anticipated for Fraser River Pink Salmon in even-numbered years.

Mandatory and voluntary measures have been implemented to support prey availability and reduce disturbance to Southern Resident Killer Whales, including within southern B.C. waters and key foraging areas within the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Swiftsure Bank, near the mouth of the Fraser River and the Gulf Islands. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

In some cases, recreational fisheries may be reduced or closed due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season. See Section 13.4.1.6 for information on incidental harvest, bycatch and constraints to Fraser Pink fisheries.

As part of Chinook management measures, Fraser River recreational fisheries will remain closed to salmon fishing until open. Opportunities for species other than Chinook will be informed by in-season abundance and other conservation issues (e.g., Coho, Steelhead, etc.). Reduced fishing opportunities may be provided in tributary areas during times and locations where at-risk Chinook stocks would not be encountered. See Section 13.1.4 for more information.

As part of the IFR Steelhead conservation measures being implemented in 2026, a rolling window closure will be applied to the recreational fishery in the Fraser River (including Areas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10). No fishing for salmon will be permitted within the times and areas in the Fraser River identified in [Appendix 7](#). Note that these recreational closures do not apply to marine recreational fisheries.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Catch monitoring programs including seasonal creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch survey (iREC) are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast and Lower Fraser stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

Fraser River

During odd-numbered years, creel surveys are conducted in portions of the Lower Fraser River and select tributaries in order to estimate recreational catch and effort for the times and areas surveyed. Typically, the creel survey in the Lower Fraser River mainstem begins when the mainstem is opened to recreational salmon fishing; however, over the last number of years, the survey end date has been variable (mid-September to end of November). The creel surveys conducted on the Chilliwack River and Nicomen-Norrish recreational fisheries have remained stable over the last number of years both in times and areas (Chilliwack is surveyed from mid-September to mid-November and Nicomen-Norrish is surveyed from early October to the end of November).

Catch monitoring programs in the Fraser watershed upstream of Alexandria range from fisher-reported catch to highly intensive creel surveys; however, some times and areas are unmonitored. Expected effort and catch, harvest rates, potential bycatch, and any biological sampling requirements are taken into account when planning the catch monitoring program for these areas.

13.4.1.7.3 Commercial Fisheries

Allocation arrangements for Fraser Pink Salmon within the commercial fleet is as follows:

Table 13–43: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
Fraser	11 to 20, 29, 121, 123 to 127	82.5%	4.0%*	3.0%*	0.5% ^c	10.0%

Notes on Pink allocations (south):

* Pink bycatch provision required for fisheries on more abundant species

^c potential for future re-negotiation. Pink bycatch required for fisheries on more abundant species

Fraser Commercial Pink Fisheries

There is no harvestable surplus of Fraser River Pink Salmon anticipated in 2026. There is generally an insignificant abundance of Pink Salmon that return to the Fraser River in even-numbered years. Pink retention bycatch may be permitted in Fraser River fisheries directed on other salmon species.

Area B (Seine), Area H (Troll) and Area D/E (Gill Net)

No fisheries are anticipated as 2026 is an off-cycle year for Fraser River Pink Salmon. Pink bycatch retention is permitted in Fraser River Sockeye-directed fisheries.

Area G (Troll)

No fisheries are anticipated as 2026 is an off-cycle year for Fraser River Pink Salmon. Pink bycatch retention is permitted in Fraser River Sockeye-directed fisheries.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch and other fishing information for all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” fishing reports. Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in is required with a paper harvest log OR electronic transmission is required with an electronic harvest log (E-log). Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required. Partial independent on-board/at-sea observer coverage and/or mandatory dockside validation may be required for Area B Seine fisheries.

13.4.1.7.4 Fraser First Nations Commercial Pink Harvest

Demonstration Fisheries

No fisheries are anticipated as 2026 is an off-cycle year for Fraser River Pink Salmon. Pink bycatch retention may be permitted in other Fraser River fisheries directed on other salmon species. Harvest Agreements

Tsawwassen

TFN have an allocation for commercial catch outside of the Treaty as identified via the “Tsawwassen First Nations Harvest Agreement”. The allocation in the Harvest Agreement (HA) does not affirm Aboriginal or Treaty rights. Fishing undertaken via the HA will be comparable to the requirements of the current Fraser River commercial fishery (First Nations economic opportunity (EO) fishery), or a general commercial fishery (e.g., Area E).

Tsawwassen fishers will be expected to operate under the same rules that apply to other fishers taking part in that Fraser River commercial fishery. No fisheries are anticipated for 2026.

13.4.1.7.5 Economic Opportunities

No fisheries are anticipated as 2026 is an off-cycle year for Fraser River Pink Salmon. Pink bycatch retention may be permitted in other Fraser River fisheries directed on other salmon species.

13.4.1.7.6 Demonstration Fisheries

No fisheries are anticipated as 2026 is an off-cycle year for Fraser River Pink Salmon. Pink bycatch retention may be permitted in other Fraser River fisheries directed on other salmon species.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Lower Fraser

In the Lower Fraser, catch monitoring programs are managed through Activity Funding Agreements and Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements. While details will be finalized prior to fisheries occurring, the monitoring programs in place in recent years are as follows:

- Non-selective (e.g., gill net) EO fisheries have been monitored using a mandatory landing program (MLP) with packer and land-based sites where all fishers must land and have their catch validated. This program is supplemented by effort validation by vessel patrols and overflights.

- Selective (e.g., beach seine and purse seine) EO fisheries have required monitors to be present during all fishing activity to record catch information on a set-by-set basis.

13.4.1.7.7 Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirement Fisheries

There are no anticipated ESSR fisheries for Fraser Pink Salmon. See Section 13.4.1.6 for information on incidental harvest, bycatch and constraints to Fraser Pink fisheries.

13.4.2 EAST COAST VANCOUVER ISLAND AND MAINLAND PINKS

13.4.2.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

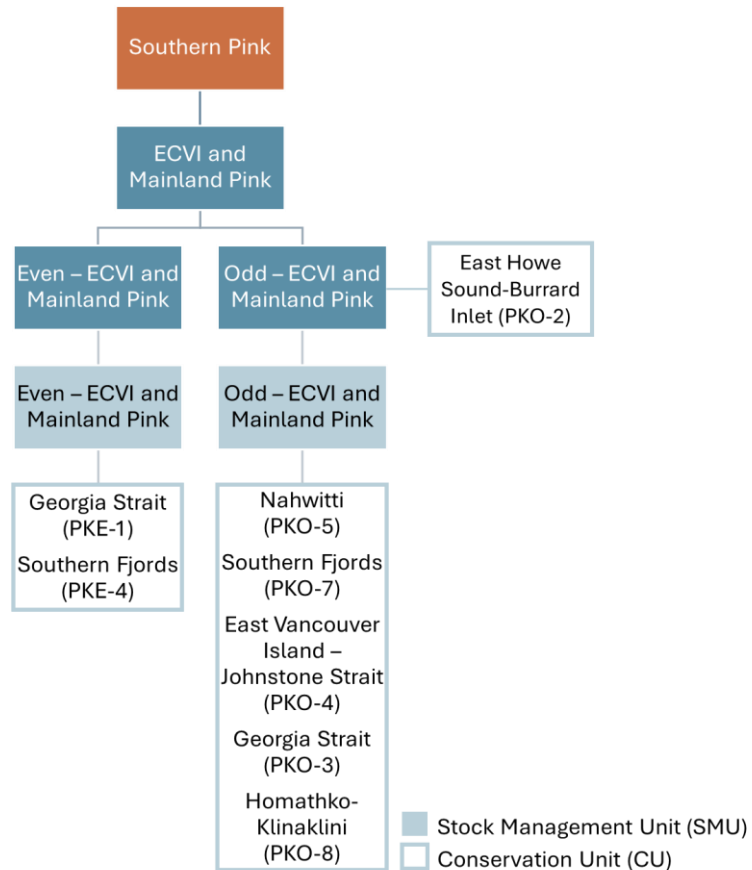


Figure 13–22: Conservation Units in the ECVI and Mainland Pink Salmon Management Unit (8 CUs)

East Coast Vancouver Island (ECVI) and Mainland Pinks are grouped into 8 conservation units (CUs) that extend over the entire East Coast of Vancouver Island as well from Seymour Inlet South to Burrard Inlet on the Mainland of British Columbia. All Pink Salmon mature at 2 years of age which results in the reproductive isolation of even and odd year brood lines. Within the Inside South Coast region there are many systems that support both even and odd year brood lines and the methods for identifying CUs take that into account. The cycle lines tend to be more even-year dominant as you shift North within the management unit and more odd-year dominant as you shift South.

These stocks are mainly harvested incidentally or as bycatch during mixed-stock Johnstone Strait Fraser River Sockeye and Pink-directed fisheries. In addition, these stocks can be harvested in Johnstone Strait test fisheries. Directed fisheries have occurred in some terminal areas, for instance portions of Howe Sound, Jervis Inlet, and Knight Inlet. Historically, the

majority of commercial harvests have occurred by purse seine. Opportunities are also available for First Nations and recreational harvesters; however, effort is generally low.

The migration of these stocks to the terminal areas normally begins in early to mid-August and is usually complete by the middle to the end of September. These stocks may be managed as an aggregate early in the season (provided surpluses are expected for stocks) and then separately as they enter the terminal areas.

13.4.2.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.4.2.2.1 Pre-season

See [Appendix 8](#) for the full 2026 Salmon Outlook.

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Table 13–44: 2026 Outlook for East Coast Vancouver Island and Mainland Pink stocks.

Outlook Unit	2026 Outlook Category	Comments
Squamish - Odd only (CUs: East Howe Sound-Burrard Inlet; and, Georgia Strait)	ND	Squamish Pink Salmon are rebuilding; however, no target run size has been developed and available quantitative assessment information has not been reviewed. (2024 Outlook Category was 'ND')
Areas 11 to 13 - Odd & Even	2-3 (NEVI and Area 12 Mainland Inlets); 2-3 (Area 13)	Since 2019, there have been observations of some key Area 12 Mainland Inlet systems. Even Year: 2024 saw improved returns throughout the South Coast with generally improved returns to systems on Vancouver Island and in the Mainland Inlets. Returns were somewhat below the long-term average for the mainland, but most systems exceeded the recent (3 cycle) generational average. Odd Year: 2025 saw varied returns throughout South Coast. Generally, Northern Vancouver Island was well below the historical adult abundance, and generally below brood year abundance. Mainland inlet returns in 2025 saw generally lower returns, albeit with some exceptions where abundance exceeded brood year returns. Expectations north of the Adam River are for continued improvements in 2027, but returns are unlikely to exceed the long-term average escapement. Counts elsewhere were also reduced relative to recent returns, with Quinsam River returns being amongst the lowest since 2018. These observations suggest that we will see below average to average escapements for systems south of Adam River. Historically, Pink returns to this area have been highly variable and expectations continue to be highly uncertain. (2024 Outlook Category was '2/3'; 2023 Outlook Category was '1/3')

13 SOUTHERN PINK FISHING PLAN

Outlook Unit	2026 Outlook Category	Comments
Georgia Strait - West - Odd & Even	3	These are primarily odd-year dominant Pink stocks. Returns in 2025 to the Tsolum River were well above the odd-year 3 generation average and similar to brood returns of 294K in 2023. Puntledge and Big Qualicum Rivers were 70-85% of the 3 generation average while Nanaimo River was well below average at 7.1K. Assuming similar marine survival, the outlook for 2027 is for near to above average returns. Due to the high variability of Pink Salmon, these expectations are highly uncertain. (2025 Outlook Category was 3; 2024 Outlook Category was 2)
Georgia Strait - East - Odd & Even	3	These are primarily odd-year dominant stocks. Assessment information on Pink Salmon in this area is limited and focused on odd year returns. Returns in 2025 were about 40% of the odd-year 3 generation average and well below the brood year return in 2023. Assuming moderate marine survival, 2027 returns are expected to be near average. Due to the high variability of Pink Salmon, these expectations are highly uncertain. (2025 Outlook Category was '3'; 2024 Outlook Category was '2/3')

Historically Pink returns have been highly variable and expectations are highly uncertain.

13.4.2.2.2 In-season

Historically, weekly assessments to determine abundance and potential fishing opportunities have been based on overflights, on-grounds surveys of the terminal areas and in some years, limited effort seine, gill net, and troll assessment fisheries. Assessment plans for the upcoming season have not yet been developed and are typically dependent on funding availability, outlook category and early in-season indications of abundance through other programs such as Fraser Sockeye-directed test fisheries.

13.4.2.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

13.4.2.3.1 In-season Decisions

Commercial representatives are consulted in-season through area harvest committee advisory bodies. The following considerations will guide commercial fisheries management decisions:

- Commercial fishing opportunities are generally not considered until at least 30% to 40% of target escapements are in the river or are identified in terminal sanctuary areas, and there is evidence that a significant proportion of the return has not yet entered the river or sanctuary area.
- A cautious approach to managing Pink stocks in terminal areas will continue based on uncertainty in returns. Increased monitoring subject to in-season risk assessment may be required.
- Pink-directed fisheries will be restricted to approach waters and terminal areas.
- Fishing occurs during daylight hours only.
- Fishing boundaries will be established to minimize encounters of Chinook, Coho, Sockeye, and Chum, and to ensure escapement targets are reached.
- A boundary may be implemented in Upper Knight Inlet to conserve weaker Pink stocks.
- Limited participation commercial fisheries may occur. This will be confirmed in-season based on assessment information.

13.4.2.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO EAST COAST VANCOUVER ISLAND AND MAINLAND PINK FISHERIES

The abundance of these stocks can be highly variable and there are difficulties in assessing these stocks due to glacial water conditions and limitations of available assessment methods. The funding for in-season assessment of ECVI and Mainland Pink stocks is currently uncertain; fisheries directed on these stocks are contingent on in-season assessment information.

13.4.2.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.4.2.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food, Social and Ceremonial Fisheries

The majority of the Pink harvest occurs incidentally while harvesting co-migrating Sockeye Salmon and in years of low Sockeye abundance.

First Nations opportunities to harvest salmon for FSC purposes are provided through communal licences issued by DFO. In addition to these FSC fisheries, First Nations access Pink Salmon through ESSR harvests at hatchery facilities. In recent years, harvest opportunities have been available at Big Qualicum and Quinsam River Hatchery facilities.

Refer to Table 10–1 in Southern B.C./Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under this licence, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by this vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Treaty Fisheries

Tla'amin (Domestic)

The Domestic allocation for Pink Salmon under the Tla'amin Treaty ($\text{ʔaʔjux}^w\text{egəs}$) is as follows:

In any year, the Tla'amin Fish Allocation for Pink Salmon is a maximum of 5,000 Pink Salmon. The allocation will be determined by an abundance-based formula.

The Tla'amin Nation provides catch reports to the Department through the Aboriginal Harvest Management System (AHMS). The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing time period, location of harvest, harvest count by species, harvest effort, and biological samples.

13.4.2.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

The Pink Salmon returning to the Mainland Inlets provide recreational fishing opportunities in inside waters of the South Coast. Mainland Pinks typically return in dominant even-year cycles, and fisheries targeting Mainland Pinks take place primarily in Johnstone Strait and terminal areas in the Mainland Inlets.

East Coast Vancouver Island stocks are less abundant and little effort and harvest takes place on these stocks, apart from the Quinsam and Campbell rivers where Pinks can return in abundance. Freshwater recreational fishery effort has increased in recent years, in particular at the Quinsam and Campbell rivers where large returns have occurred.

Marine recreational Pink fisheries typically take place in August, and updates are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website:

<http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>. The normal daily limit is four (4).

Recreational Pink fisheries targeting Mainland Pink stocks and hatchery returns to the Quinsam and Campbell rivers are anticipated in 2026.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch survey (iREC) are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery. South Coast and Lower Fraser stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational harvest in each area.

13.4.2.6 COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

13.4.2.6.1 Allocations

Table 13–45: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
12 to 13 (Mainland Inlets only)	73.0%	9.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18.0%

East Coast Vancouver Island and Mainland Commercial Pink Fisheries

Fishing opportunities may be considered if stocks appear to be returning in sufficient abundance. Commercial harvest opportunities are dependent on run timing, but typically occur between mid-August and mid-September. The areas typically fished are outlined below and may be updated in-season.

If there are fisheries proceeding in 2026, they will be occurring in terminal areas outside of the migratory path of IFR Steelhead and will thus not be impacted by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures. These areas are outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

Area B Seine

Fishing areas in Thompson Sound, Bond Sound, and Jervis Inlet.

Area B Seine has an approved CSAF Demonstration fishery to explore a targeted Quinsam River Pink fishery. See the ECVI and Mainland Pink Demonstration Fisheries section below and [Appendix 4](#) for more information.

Area D Gill Net

Fishing in the approach areas to Thompson Sound and Bond Sound (details to be determined in-season).

Area E Gill Net

Fishing areas in Jervis Inlet.

Area H Troll

Fishing areas in Jervis Inlet and the terminal approach areas of Thompson Sound, however boundaries will be determined in-season. Coho sensitive areas may remain closed.

Area H Troll has an approved CSAF Demonstration fishery to explore targeted Pink fisheries directed at more abundant Pink Salmon stocks returning to the South Coast Area in the Quinsam River and Mainland Inlets. See the ECVI and Mainland Pink Demonstration Fisheries section below and [Appendix 4](#) for more information.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

There is a mandatory harvest log and in-season reporting program for catch information for all commercial fisheries.

- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in is required with a paper harvest OR electronic transmission is required with an electronic harvest log (E-log).

Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the Conditions of Licence for each gear type. Additional requirements are in place for providing biological samples as required.

East Coast Vancouver Island and Mainland Pink Demonstration Fisheries

If there are fisheries proceeding in 2026, they will be occurring in terminal areas outside of the migratory path of IFR Steelhead and will thus not be impacted by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures. These areas are outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

ECVI and Mainland First Nations Commercial Pink Harvest***Demonstration Fisheries***

A-Tlegay Fisheries Society, Area B Seine and Area H Troll have an approved CSAF Demonstration fishery to explore targeted Pink fisheries directed at more abundant Pink

Salmon stocks returning to the South Coast Area, and plan to explore options for limited fleet participation, limited catch and/or limited area, while limiting impacts to comigrating stocks. Fishery management guidelines have been developed between A-Tlegay, Area B Seine and Area H Troll to target Quinsam Pink Salmon.

Area H has approved CSAF Demonstration fisheries to fish Pink in the Broughton Archipelago (Area 12) and in Jervis Inlet (Area 16).

13.4.2.6.2 Economic Opportunities

There are no economic opportunity arrangements or harvest agreements in this area.

13.4.2.6.3 Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirement Fisheries

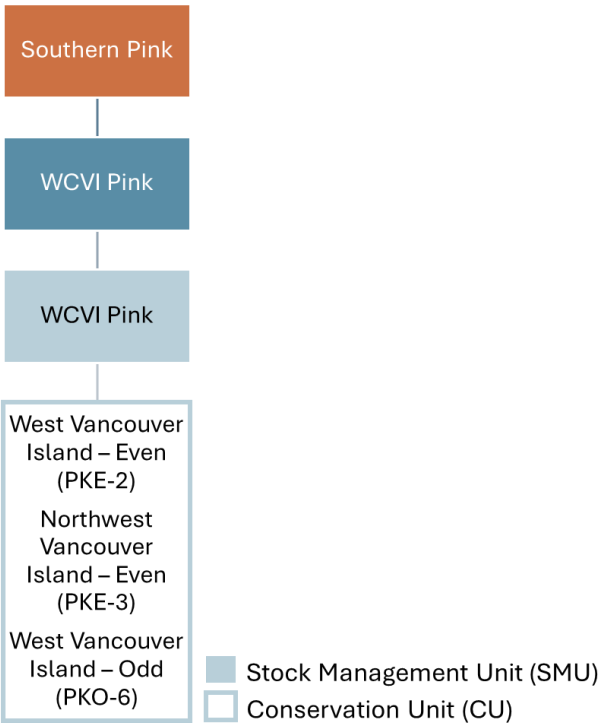
ESSR fisheries may occur at DFO hatchery facilities that have a surplus of returning hatchery Pinks. In recent years, Pink ESSR fisheries have taken place at:

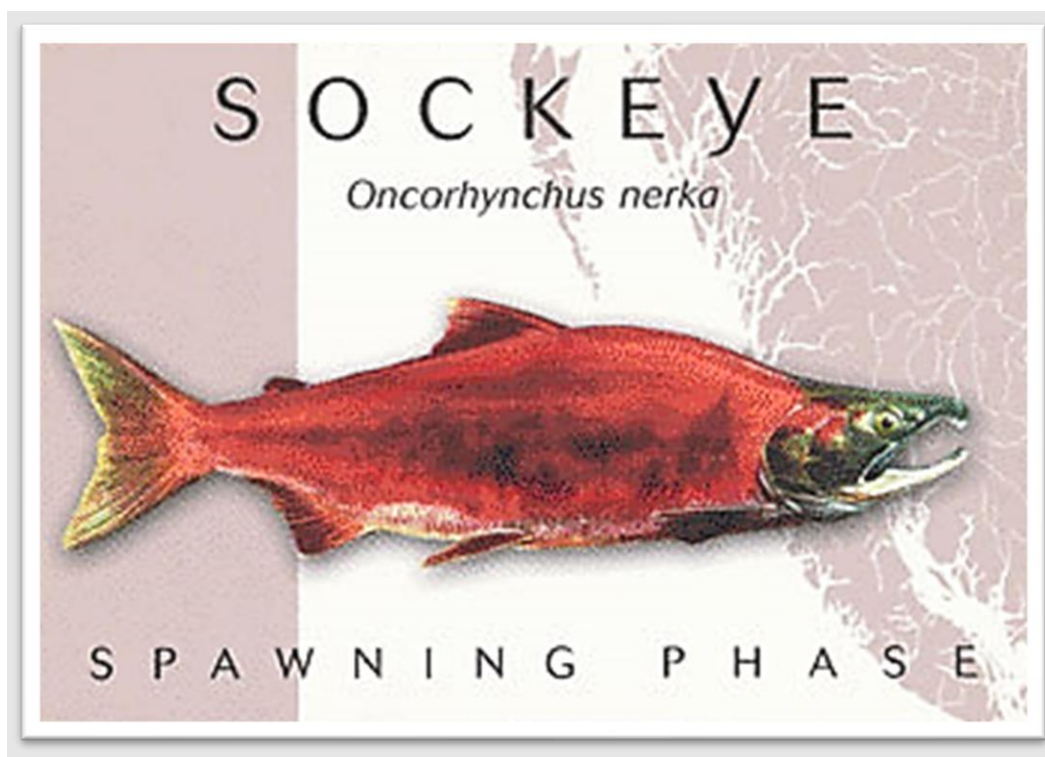
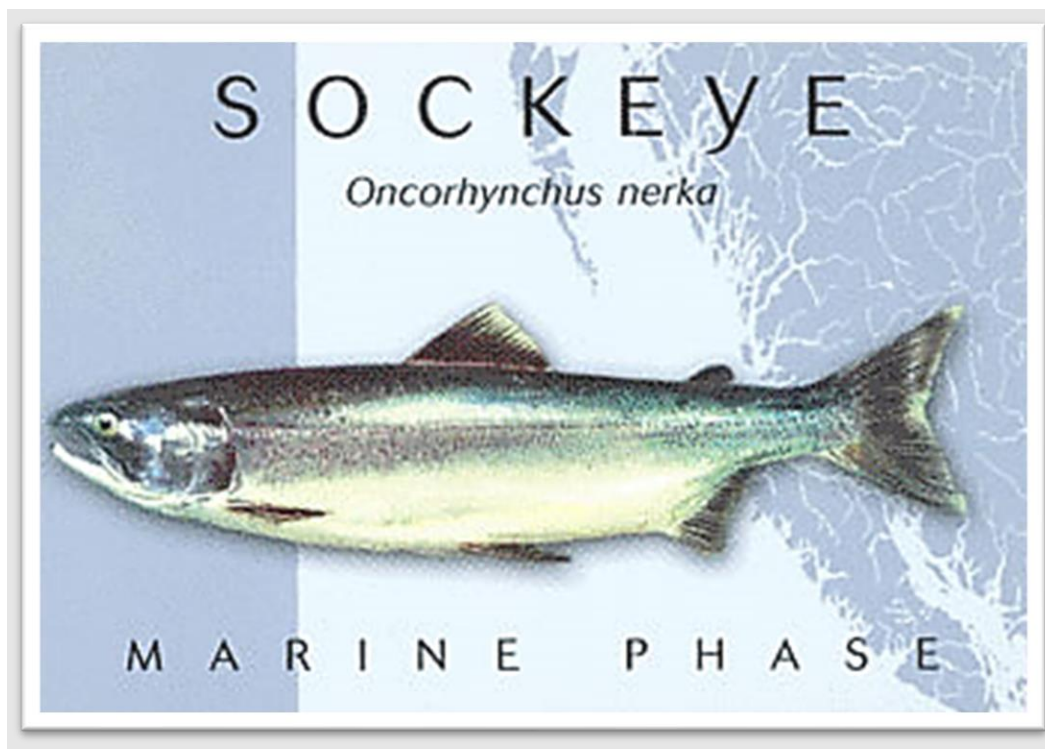
- Quinsam Hatchery
- Big Qualicum

13.4.3 WCVI PINK SALMON

13.4.3.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

This section of the IFMP is under development and further information will be provided in a future year. There are no directed commercial fisheries on WCVI Pink Salmon planned for 2026. Pink non-retention in recreational fisheries is in place for in-shore areas of the WCVI.



13 SOUTHERN SOCKEYE SALMON FISHING PLAN**13.5 SOUTHERN SOCKEYE SALMON FISHING PLAN**

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13 SOUTHERN SOCKEYE SALMON FISHING PLAN

13.5.1 SOUTHERN SOCKEYE - OVERVIEW

In Southern BC, Sockeye Salmon stocks are found primarily in tributaries of the Fraser River and in streams throughout Vancouver Island and the mainland. For southern Sockeye, returns to Barkley/Somass (WCVI), Fraser River and Okanagan are actively managed and detailed information is provided below outlining management of these populations. Information on smaller Sockeye populations in the WCVI- Other Sockeye unit is under development and further information will be provided in a subsequent year.

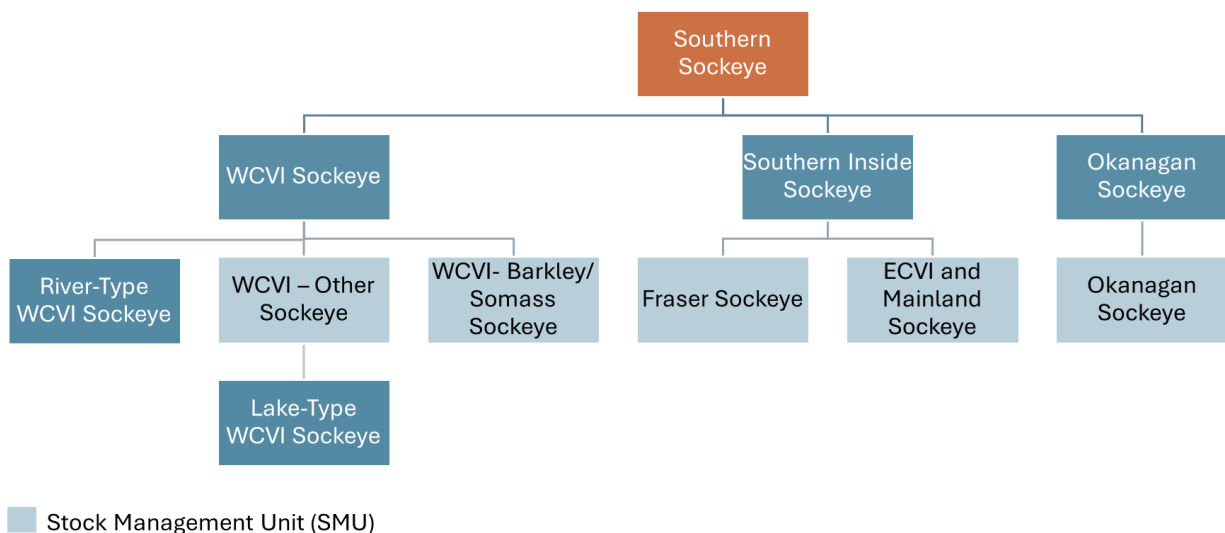


Figure 13–23: Southern Sockeye Overview

13.5.1.1 SOCKEYE ENHANCEMENT INFORMATION

The DFO major operation enhancement facilities that produce Sockeye are:

South Coast Area:

Rosewall Creek hatchery

Fraser River Area:

Inch Sockeye Satellite

Gates Spawning Channel – *not operating in 2026*

Horsefly Spawning Channel – *not operating in 2026*

Nadina Spawning Channel

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Weaver Spawning Channel

Shuswap Falls hatchery

SEP Production Plans and Post-Season Production Data

The following website contains links to summaries of the most recent years' Post-Season Production from DFO and DFO-partnered hatcheries, as well as the current version of the SEP Production Plan. Note that from February to June each year the Production Plan is in draft form and is subject to change. From June to the following February, the Final Production Plan is available.

[IFMP SEP Data Tables | Pacific Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](https://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ifmp-sep-data-tables/pacific-region/fisheries-and-oceans-canada)

13.5.1.2 SOUTHERN BC SOCKEYE – SEP PROPOSALS OR UPDATES FOR 2026

Bowron River Sockeye and Taseko Lake Sockeye

Bowron River Sockeye and Taseko Lake Sockeye were initially enhanced in response to the Big Bar landslide, with program funding tied to landslide mitigation and later to the Pacific Salmon Strategic Initiative (PSSI). With the end of the PSSI on March 31, 2026, SEP does not have ongoing funding to support any sockeye production at DFO's Shuswap Falls Hatchery. Should funding be identified in the future, SEP maintains the flexibility to bring this production back online, with an emphasis on supporting rebuilding of low abundance cycle lines.

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13.5.2 OVERVIEW OF WCVI SOCKEYE

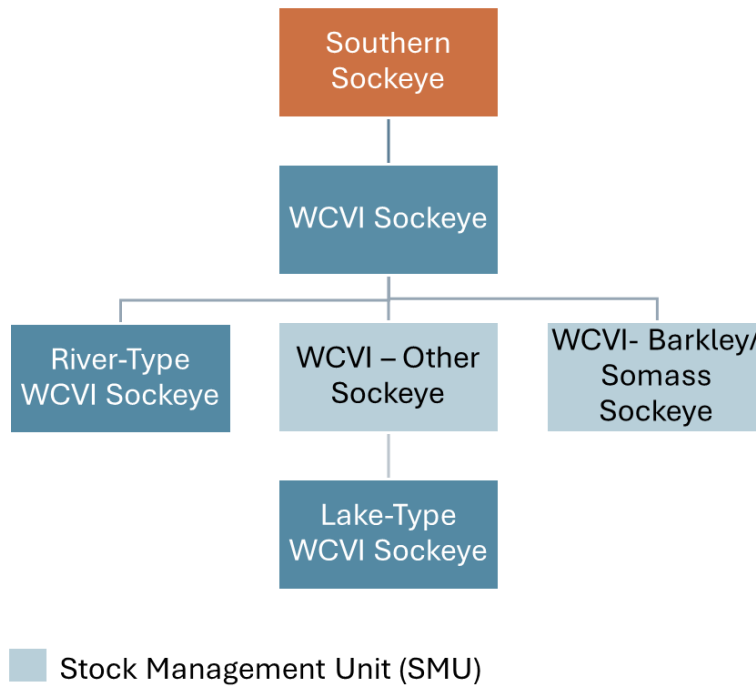


Figure 13–24 Overview of WCVI Sockeye

The WCVI Sockeye Management Unit consists of several Sockeye conservation units; including ‘lake- type’ and ‘river type’ Sockeye. Area 23 stocks are currently the only Sockeye populations in the WCVI management unit with sufficient production to support directed fisheries from all sectors. Some other stocks are harvested by local First Nations for FSC and treaty domestic use.

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13.5.3 WCVI BARKLEY/SOMASS SOCKEYE

13.5.3.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

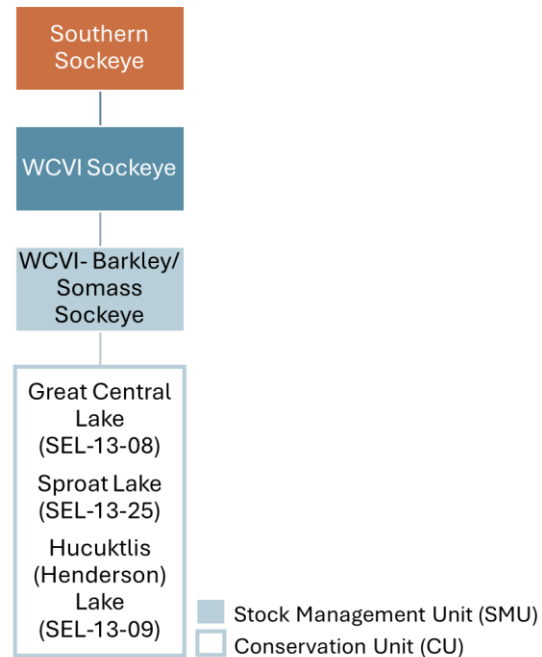


Figure 13–25: Overview of WCVI Barkley/Somass Sockeye

There are three major Sockeye stocks in Area 23, of which Great Central and Sproat Lake stocks are the largest. The combined production from these two lakes averages about 760,000 annually and accounts for more than 90% of the total Sockeye run to the area. Hucuktis (Henderson) Lake supports a smaller but substantial Sockeye run averaging about 30,000 over the past 30 years. However, in many recent years the abundance of Hucuktis Sockeye has been low and fisheries are managed to limit interceptions of this stock. There is a much smaller lake-type population in Maggie Lake as well as small populations of ‘creek-type’ Sockeye observed in Carnation Creek, Effingham River, Nahmint River, Sarita River and Toquart River.

Area 23 Sockeye fisheries are managed through a “co-management” process via the Area 23 Harvest Committee. Members of the Area 23 Harvest Committee include representatives from local First Nations, fishery advisory committees and local stewardship groups. The Area 23 Harvest Committee serves both a plenary function and a consensus decision-making function. This format allows for improved planning of local fisheries and better conflict resolution among harvesters. The Area 23 Harvest Committee has developed a detailed Area 23 Sockeye Local Integrated Fisheries Management Plan that describes the basis of the management and assessment of the Area 23 Sockeye fisheries and harvest plans for each sector. This plan is used to guide an in-season decision making process during which assessment results are reviewed

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and weekly harvest plans are determined. An overview of the fishery implementation is provided below.

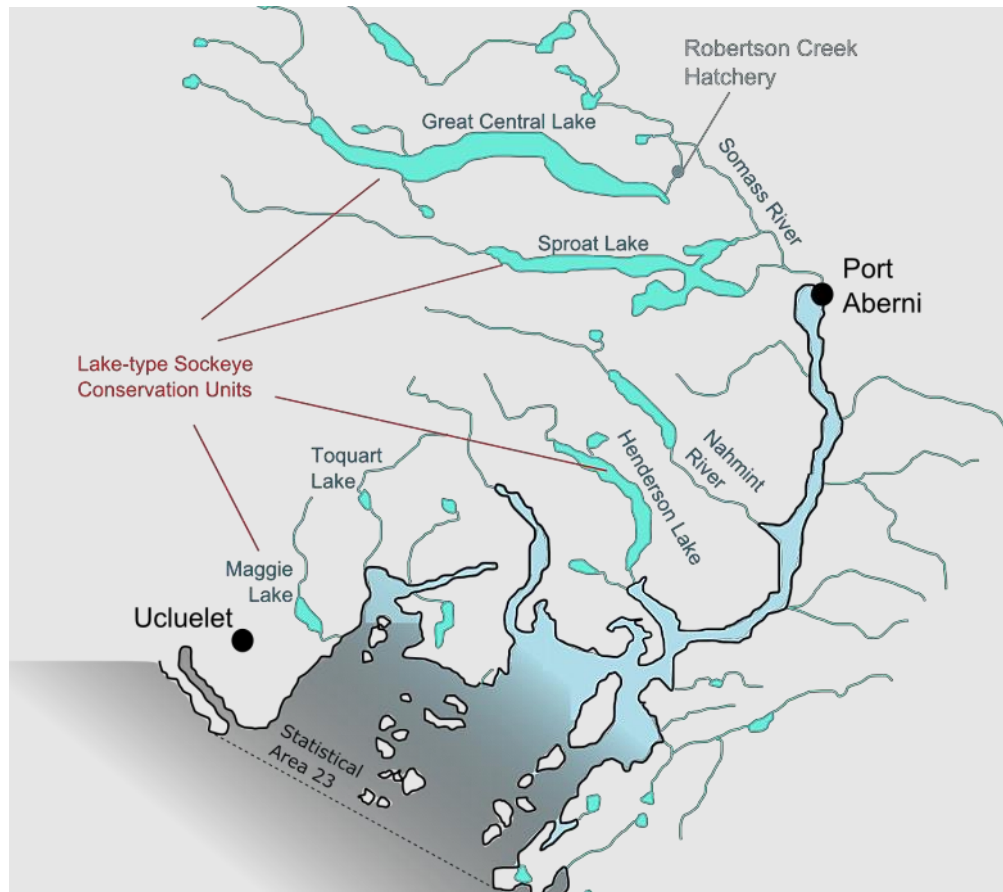


Figure 13–26: Barkley Sound and Alberni Inlet - Major features and salmon conservation units

13.5.3.2 ENHANCEMENT INFORMATION

For two of the major stocks, enhancement activities have been used to increase production. Great Central Lake was fertilized initially from 1970 to 1973 and then annually since 1977. Hucuktlis (Henderson) Lake was fertilized from 1979 to 1999. Sproat Lake was fertilized once in 1985; however, the program was discontinued due to resulting algae blooms. In addition to lake fertilization efforts, a hatchery at Hucuktlis Lake operated by the Uchucklesaht First Nation released fed Sockeye fry annually from 1992 to 2007. Total hatchery production ranged from about 70,000 to 2,300,000 fry depending on the year. The contribution of the hatchery to the Hucuktlis Lake Sockeye return was not assessed annually. However, for two brood years when the population was marked the hatchery contribution was variable.

Stable funding for stewardship activities such as habitat restoration and lake fertilization was identified as a priority by the Harvest Committee. In support of this priority, the commercial

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sector provides the proceeds from up to 15,000 Sockeye out of the commercial harvest to support stewardship activities annually.

There is currently no hatchery supplementation of these stocks.

13.5.3.3 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.5.3.3.1 Pre-season

Statistical models are used to forecast Sockeye returns to Great Central and Sproat lakes using correlates of early marine survival and observations of brood year survival (i.e., from earlier returning age classes).

Forecasts generated from all methods are compared and based on their correspondence, their relative accuracy at predicting past returns, and other relevant information, a single management forecast is produced for both stocks. The management forecast is used to guide early season fisheries until the run size is estimated based on in-season observations.

For 2026 fishery management purposes, the A23 Roundtable has agreed to begin fisheries in the “High” zone (700,000-1,000,000 adult return) for early season harvest management. Based on the forecast models considered, the forecast adopted for management purposes is 750,000 adult Sockeye.

There is variability among the 2026 model forecasts. Predictions range between 160,592 (survival stanza method), 778,017 (multiple regression model), 887,202 (Coho leading indicator model), and 1,295,692 (sibling model).

All models, except the Coho leading indicator, predict GCL will comprise the dominant portion of the run. In 2021 and 2022 (broods returning as ages 5 and 4 fish, respectively, in 2026), escapements to both lakes were near or above average. However, Great Central Sockeye have dominated returns observed thus far from these brood years. Estimated smolt abundances emigrating from Great Central Lake and Sproat Lake in 2023 and 2024 were low compared to historic levels. Returns from the 2023 sea-entry year thus far suggest relatively high marine survival for Great Central Sockeye but moderate-to-low marine survival for Sproat Sockeye. The marine survival rate for the 2024 sea-entry year is unknown because only jacks that went to sea in 2024 have returned so far. Therefore, a precautionary management approach for early season fisheries is warranted until the total run size and stock composition can be more accurately determined. In-season estimates of stock composition will be available during the second and third weeks of June. The first preliminary run size reforecast is expected 18 June 2026.

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The recommended management outlook for Hucuktlis (Henderson) Sockeye is the “Low” zone for harvest management, corresponding to an expected return of 15 000–25 000. Spawner abundances, smolt abundances, and marine survival all appear close to long-term averages for the dominant cohorts that will return in 2026, indicating the Hucuktlis Sockeye return will likely be near-average.

13.5.3.3.2 In-season

Stock assessments are conducted during the migration period using data compiled from escapement counts and fisheries. The objectives of the assessments are to 1) update pre-season run size forecasts for Great Central and Sproat Lake (Somass) Sockeye based on in-season observations and 2) evaluate harvest and escapement levels relative to targets. The assessments are conducted weekly starting from mid-June to early August. While there is typically not enough in-season information to revise the outlook for Hucuktlis Lake Sockeye, catch of Hucuktlis Sockeye in Area 23 fisheries is monitored using stock composition analysis from DNA samples.

Table 13–46: Planned Sockeye Test Fisheries. All dates subject to change based on in-season factors. In-season information from initial TF is important for determining timing of subsequent TFs.

Test Fishery	Proposed Proponent	Test Fishery Purpose	Potential Dates (preliminary)	
			Start	End
Barkley Sound SN	Hupacasath	Somass Sockeye	June 1	Sep 8

See Section 7.2.3 for entire table for the 2026 proposed test fisheries.

13.5.3.4 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Annual harvest plans are developed to meet the following objectives:

- Achieve the escapement (and corresponding harvest rate) associated with the forecast run size;
- Limit impacts on non-target stocks and species and stocks of concern;
- Meet allocation priorities;
- Distribute the TAC over the duration of the fishing season to maintain the biological diversity of the population (i.e. to maintain a diverse contribution of various age and run timing classes);
- Reduce gear conflict among harvest sectors;

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- Maximize the value of harvest;
- Provide for stability and predictability of harvest opportunities;
- Provide assessment information (e.g. catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) abundance indices, stock and age composition sampling);
- Allow sufficient flexibility to respond to changes in fish behavior / migration caused by environmental conditions through the Area 23 Harvest Committee in-season decision-making process; and
- Allow for the in-season adjustment of the harvest rate when the proportions of one of the target stocks (Great Central Lake or Sproat Lake) is much lower than the other, resulting in the escapement of one of the stocks falling below the Upper Biological Benchmark.

The Area 23 local Sockeye management plan further details management assumptions, actions and scenarios used to guide in-season decision-making.

13.5.3.5 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS

Environmental Conditions

In-season harvest planning is complicated by environmental conditions such as low water levels and high-water temperatures that impact migration timing and behavior of the fish.

Hucuktlis (Henderson) Lake Sockeye

With the exception of Maa-nulth Treaty fisheries, Hucuktlis Sockeye are not targeted in Area 23 Sockeye fisheries, although they are intercepted. In recent years, Maa-nulth fisheries targeting Hucuktlis Sockeye have been voluntarily curtailed under a sharing arrangement, the Maa-nulth-Canada Henderson/Somass Sockeye Accounting Arrangement. The status of Hucuktlis Sockeye determines the allowable interception rate of Hucuktlis Sockeye in Area 23 Sockeye fisheries. In-season adjustments to reduce impacts to Hucuktlis Sockeye may be necessary if higher harvest rates occur. Additional planning with the Area 23 Harvest Committee will develop guidelines to continue improving the management of Hucuktlis, Great Central Lake and Sproat Lake Sockeye stocks.

13.5.3.6 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

Assessment results and management issues are reviewed weekly through the Area 23 in-season assessment and management process. Fishing plans are developed based on the Area 23 Sockeye Local Integrated Fisheries Management Plan. The management table for the Somass

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stocks below shows the escapement and harvest rate targets and allocations by run size. The management table for Hucuktlis Sockeye below defines fishery reference points for that stock.

All fisheries are managed to achieve the harvest rate that will result in the escapement target associated with the forecast run size. Methods used to control the harvest rate of the fisheries depend on the gear type. The primary method used to manage catch of First Nations and commercial net fisheries is limiting effort (i.e., the duration of the opening and/or number of participating vessels). The level of effort is determined by an overall weekly catch target. Secondary controls may also be used in net fisheries, such as closing an area with a concentration of holding fish that are particularly vulnerable to the gear. The primary control to manage the catch of recreational fisheries is through daily limits, which vary according to run size. Secondary controls, such as time and area closures, are also used.

For all fisheries, seasonal closures are in place and in years of low abundance the opening time may be delayed or shortened.

Continued for 2026-27: The baseline allocation for the Sockeye test fishery will be 9,000, with catch occurring earlier in the season.

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Table 13–47: Somass Sockeye management table

MANAGEMENT ZONE	1 - Critical	2 - Very Low		3 - Low		4 - Moderate		5 - High		6 - Abundant	
Run size	Less than 170,000	200,000 to 350,000		350,000 to 500,000		500,000 to 700,000		700,000 to 1,000,000		1,000,000 to 1,800,000	
Reference point		low end	high end	low end	high end	low end	high end	low end	high end	low end	high end
Escapement goal	Up to 170,000	170,000	262,500	262,500	325,000	325,000	350,000	350,000	400,000	400,000	540,000
Harvest rate	0	15%	25%	25%	35%	35%	50%	50%	60%	60%	70%
Maanulth first nations	0	4,900	13,200	13,050	15,825	15,825	20,847	20,847	22,886	22,886	22,886
RECREATIONAL (expected catch)	0	4,000	21,000	21,000	45,000	45,000	63,000	63,000	90,000	90,000	100,000
Tsumass total allowable catch	0	12,480	31,070	31,070	45,079	45,079	81,560	81,560	145,115	145,115	300,541
Commercial seine	0	0	10,038	10,038	33,058	33,058	99,355	99,355	193,799	193,799	487,544
Commercial gillnet	0	3,120	6,692	6,692	22,039	22,039	66,237	66,237	129,199	129,199	325,029

Table 13–48: Management zones for Hucuktli (Henderson) Lake Sockeye

MANAGEMENT ZONE	1 - Very Low	2 - Low		3 - Moderate		4 - High		5 - Abundant	
Run size	up to 15,000	15,000 to 25,000		25,000 to 45,000		45,000 to 60,000		60,000 to 150,000	
Reference point		low end	high end	low end	high end	low end	high end	low end	high end
Escapement target	up to 12,750	12,750	20,000	20,000	31,500	31,500	36,000	36,000	75,000
Harvest rate	<15%*	15%	20%	20%	30%	30%	40%	40%	50%

* incidental catch only

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13.5.3.6.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food, Social and Ceremonial

The Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations target Somass Sockeye for FSC purposes in Area 23. Harvest occurs in the Somass River and upper Alberni Inlet.

Refer to Table 10–1: Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts for Southern BC/Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

5.4 Treaty Fisheries

Maa-nulth Nations Domestic Harvest

Maa-nulth First Nations (Huu-ay-aht, Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, Yu?lu?il?ath (Ucluelet), Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k:tles7et'h' (Kyuquot Sound)) are allocated a portion of the catch of Sockeye returning to Hucuktis Lake as well as the Somass River through a modern treaty (the Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement). Individuals within the Maa-nulth First Nations are designated to harvest using a variety of gear; from smaller vessels using hook and line to larger, higher capacity vessels using commercial type gear (e.g. gill net and seine). The Maa-nulth may also designate individuals and vessels operated by non-members (e.g. commercial vessels) to fish on behalf of the Maa-nulth First Nations. The Maa-nulth fishery protocols are reported in the Fisheries Operational Guidelines and the Supporting Documents associated with the Final Agreement.

The Domestic allocations for salmon under the Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement are as follows:

Sockeye Salmon

Each year, the Maa-nulth Fish Allocation for Sockeye Salmon is an amount of Somass Sockeye salmon equal to:

When the Somass Sockeye Canadian Total Allowable Catch is 50,000 or less, 20% of the Somass Sockeye Canadian Total Allowable Catch;

When the Somass Sockeye Canadian Total Allowable Catch is greater than 50,000 and less than or equal to 85,000, then 10,000 plus 10% of that portion of the Somass Sockeye Canadian Total Allowable Catch that is greater than 50,000 and less than or equal to 85,000;

When the Somass Sockeye Canadian Total Allowable Catch is greater than 85,000 and less than or equal to 412,421, then 13,500 plus 2.87% of that portion of the Somass Sockeye Canadian Total Allowable Catch that is greater than 85,000 and less than or equal to 412,421;

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When the Somass Sockeye Canadian Total Allowable Catch is greater than 412,421, then 22,886; and

An amount of Hucuktlis Lake Sockeye salmon equal to 26.85% of the Hucuktlis Lake Total Allowable Catch up to a maximum of 17,055 pieces.

Please note that the Maa-nulth Treaty includes provisions for accumulating allocation underages and/or overages. In consultation with DFO and the Area 23 Roundtable, Maa-nulth Nations may address these underages and/or overages through pre-season fishing plans that deviate from annual allocations described above.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Maa-nulth Nations Domestic Harvest

The Maa-nulth First Nations provide electronic catch reports to the Department. The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing dates, location of harvest, species harvested, harvest effort, and catch (in pieces).

13.5.3.6.2 Recreational Fisheries

In most years, Somass Sockeye returns support Sockeye directed recreational fishing opportunities in Barkley Sound, Alberni Inlet and the Somass River. Recreational Sockeye fisheries typically commence May 1. The normal daily limit is 4 Sockeye per day in marine waters and 2 Sockeye per day in the tidal portions of the Somass River. A small portion of the freshwater section of the Somass River typically opens to one per day.

Continuing from 2024 and 2025, San Mateo Bay and the entrance to Alberni Inlet will be Sockeye non-retention starting June 30 until October 31.

Initial daily limits for recreational fisheries will be determined based on the pre-season forecast; fishing opportunities are subject to in-season management changes depending on abundance. Fishery updates are provided via Fishery Notice and published on the recreational fisheries website: <http://www.bcsportfishingguide.ca>

Recreational harvesters in possession of a valid tidal waters recreational license (or a valid provincial freshwater recreational licence if fishing in freshwater) and salmon stamp may participate in the fishery.

The average daily participation is about 150 vessels per day over the duration of the fishing season (e.g., June through July). However, the level of effort varies depending on the timing and catch-per-unit effort. In moderate to abundant run size years and during the peak of the migration, daily effort is typically between 250 to 450 individual vessels with observations of up

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to 600 vessels during peak weekend periods. There are typically 2 to 3 individual harvesters on each vessel.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

The WCVI Creel Survey generates recreational catch and effort statistics by area and species. Unlike logbook-based catch and effort estimates, which require full reporting, the creel survey employs sampling techniques using independent creel surveyors. In order to estimate catch and effort within a coefficient of variation (CV) of 10%, the survey objective is to interview 10% of the landings and conduct a minimum of 8 effort counts per month per area. The WCVI Creel survey does not cover fisheries in non-tidal waters.

The creel survey combines angler surveys and aerial boat counts to estimate recreational catch.

Anglers are interviewed at the end of fishing trips to provide both average catch by species and average fishing times, while the aerial counts from chartered aircraft capture 'instantaneous' snapshots of the number of recreational boats fishing at the time of the flight. The fishing times obtained through angler interviews are used to generate a daily profile of fishing activity which is used to expand the 'instantaneous' aerial counts of boats fishing to an estimate of the total number of boats fishing that day. In the most basic sense, the estimate of the number of boats fishing is multiplied by the average catch by species to estimate the total catch by species on that day.

By adopting a stratified random sampling design for angler interviews and aerial counts, unbiased estimates of daily catch rate are obtained and then expanded to generate monthly estimates. The estimates are stratified by day type (weekday vs. weekend), location (by creel sub-area) and time (monthly and time of the day).

For the Area 23 Sockeye fishery, designated survey sites include Clutesi Ramp and China Creek, plus others in Barkley Sound. The survey operates from mid-June to mid-September.

The internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program is used to generate estimates outside of the creel survey period.

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Table 13–49: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South Local	23	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0% ^c	0.0%

WCVI Barkley/Somass Commercial Sockeye Fisheries

Commercial harvesters in possession of an Area B seine net licence or Area D gill net licence may participate in this fishery. Opportunities for directed harvest are anticipated in 2026. Normally, fishing opportunities for all net fleets in Area 23 occur from mid-June to late July.

5.4Area B Seine

Since 2002, Area B harvesters have fished Area 23 Sockeye with a weekly catch target that is shared among the Area B licence holders. The number of vessels participating in any given opening is limited and depends on the weekly quota available. The intention of defining a weekly catch target is to provide opportunities for seine harvest that otherwise would not be available under a derby fishery model (i.e., for smaller run sizes or during early season fisheries). Prior to any scheduled opening, the Area B Seine Association provides the local area fishery manager with a list of harvesters designated to fish in that opening. The list is determined based on Area B Association protocol. The opening will not proceed if vessels outside the designated list are present in the fishing area due to the risk of additional effort exceeding the allowable harvest rate.

Area D Gill Net

The Area D Sockeye fishery operates throughout Area 23 (notwithstanding conservation closures). However, typically early season commercial gill net fisheries are restricted to the “outside” portion (Barkley Sound) seaward of Pocahtontas Point to reduce gear conflict within Alberni Inlet. In July, the fishery is restricted to the “inside” portion (Alberni Inlet) in order to reduce interceptions of later migrating Hucuktli Sockeye, which are vulnerable in the outside area.

Scheduled openings occur typically during the day between the hours of 06:00 and 20:00 in June. In July when the fleet is moved inside Alberni Inlet openings are more variable in timing depending on weekly catch targets. The fishing area and allowable effort (timing, number and length of openings) are used as harvest controls.

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Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting**Area B Seine**

Catch is estimated by summing individual harvest log catch from each harvester as reported through the FOS (Fishery Operating System) database. Catch estimates are stratified by time (duration of the opening) and by area (Subarea 23-1 and 23-2). Effort is estimated by summing individual phone in or E-log reports from each harvester as reported through the FOS database. Effort estimates are stratified by time (duration of the opening) and by area (Subarea 23-1 and 23-2).

All Area B catch landed in the Area 23 Sockeye fishery is validated by an independent Observer Service Provider through a dockside monitoring program. Validated catch reported are submitted weekly (by COB Wednesday) to the local fishery manager by the Observer Service Provider.

Area D Gill Net

Catch is estimated by summing individual harvest log catch from each harvester as reported through the FOS (Fishery Operating System) database. Catch estimates are stratified by time (duration of the opening) and by area (Barkley - Outside and Barkley - Inside). Effort is estimated by summing individual phone in or E-log reports from each harvester as reported through the FOS database. Effort estimates are stratified by time (duration of the opening) and by area (Barkley - Outside and Barkley - Inside).

13.5.3.6.4 WCVI – Barkley/Somass Sockeye Demonstration Fisheries

There are currently no demonstration fisheries planned on these stocks.

13.5.3.6.5 WCVI Barkley/Somass First Nations Commercial Sockeye Harvest***Demonstration Fisheries***

There are currently no demonstration fisheries planned on these stocks.

Harvest Agreements

Maa-nulth Fisheries (Commercial)

In addition to the allocation of salmon for domestic purposes, Maa-nulth has an allocation for commercial catch outside of the Treaty as identified in the “Maa-nulth First Nations Harvest Agreement”. Fishing under the Harvest Agreement will be managed with requirements comparable to the regular commercial fisheries.

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Under the Harvest Agreement, the allocation for Hucuktlis Lake Sockeye Salmon in a portion of Area 23 will be for 20% of the Terminal Commercial Total Allowable Catch after accounting for the Maa-nulth Domestic harvest allocation from the total CTAC.

Economic Opportunities

Economic opportunities for the Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations are expected for the 2026 season. Economic opportunity fisheries will be conducted under agreements that specify provisions for planning fisheries, allocations, catch reporting requirements as well as roles and responsibilities regarding the management of the fishery. These fisheries will be conducted separately from FSC fisheries, under the same harvest decision guidelines as the commercial fishery and fish harvested have been off-set with licences voluntarily relinquished from the commercial fishery. Communal licences are issued weekly to both the Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations following the development of an Annual Harvest Plan and through the in-season decision-making process.

The Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations share an allocation of Somass Sockeye for economic opportunity (EO) fisheries as defined in the Tsu-ma-uss Fishery Agreement. There are two distinct types of fisheries that operate. The first provides for designated communal fishing days, when harvest occurs through a collective effort, such as using a drag seine net off one vessel at the Paper Mill Dam site in the lower Somass River. The harvest from designated communal fishing is distributed among members of the Nations. The second type of fishery is a traditional, artisanal net fishery. Typically, harvest occurs from relatively small vessels using gill nets. The bands may also designate vessels operated by non-members (e.g., commercial vessels) to fish on behalf of the nation. These vessels require a separate licence.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

All catch is landed at designated landing sites. Catch is verified by monitors, who count the fishers catch and issue a landing slip after validation. Catch is estimated by summing landing slip information as collected by First Nations monitors. Catch estimates are stratified by time (duration of the opening) and by area. A landing slip identifies the catch attributed to each designated harvester. More than one landing slip may be attributed to a single vessel (i.e., more than one designated harvester fishing on the vessel and catch is shared among the harvesters).

Effort will be estimated by summing individual landing events from each harvester as reported through the FOS reporting system. The E-logs will be maintained by First Nations monitors stationed at the designated landing sites. Effort estimates will be stratified by time (duration of the opening) and by area (Inlet/Lower River (as delimited by the “green lights” at the pilings)/Paper mill Dam). A landing event refers to the landing of a vessel at a designated

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landing site. As described above, there may be more than one landing slip associated with a landing event.

13.5.3.6.6 ESSR Fisheries

Very small numbers of Sockeye are sometimes harvested during ESSR fisheries for Chinook and Coho at the Robertson Creek Hatchery.

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13.5.4 WCVI – OTHER SOCKEYE

This section of the IFMP is under development and further information will be provided in a subsequent year. There are no commercial or recreational directed fisheries on these Sockeye planned for 2026. However, there are directed First Nations FSC and treaty domestic harvests that occur on many of these stocks.

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13.5.4.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

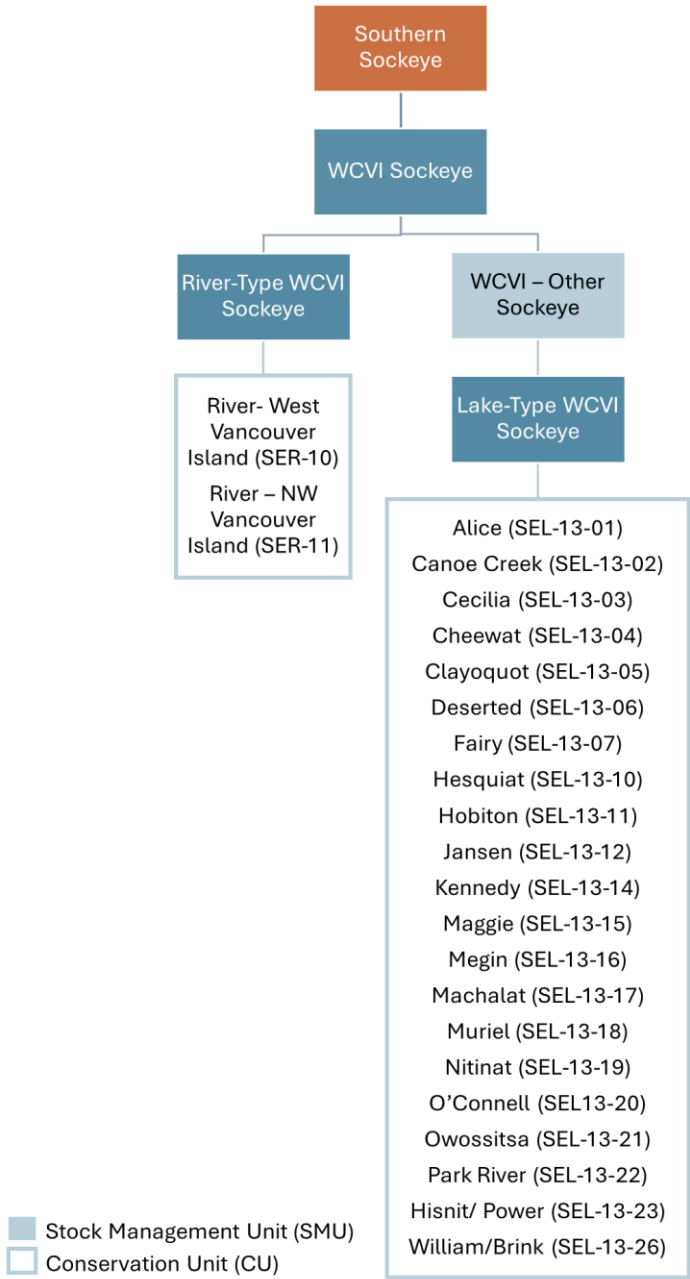


Figure 13–27: Overview of WCVI - Other Sockeye

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13.5.5 OVERVIEW OF SOUTHERN INSIDE SOCKEYE

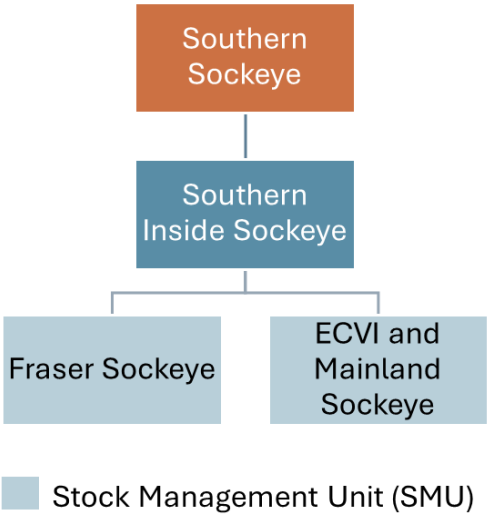


Figure 13–28: Overview of Southern Inside Sockeye

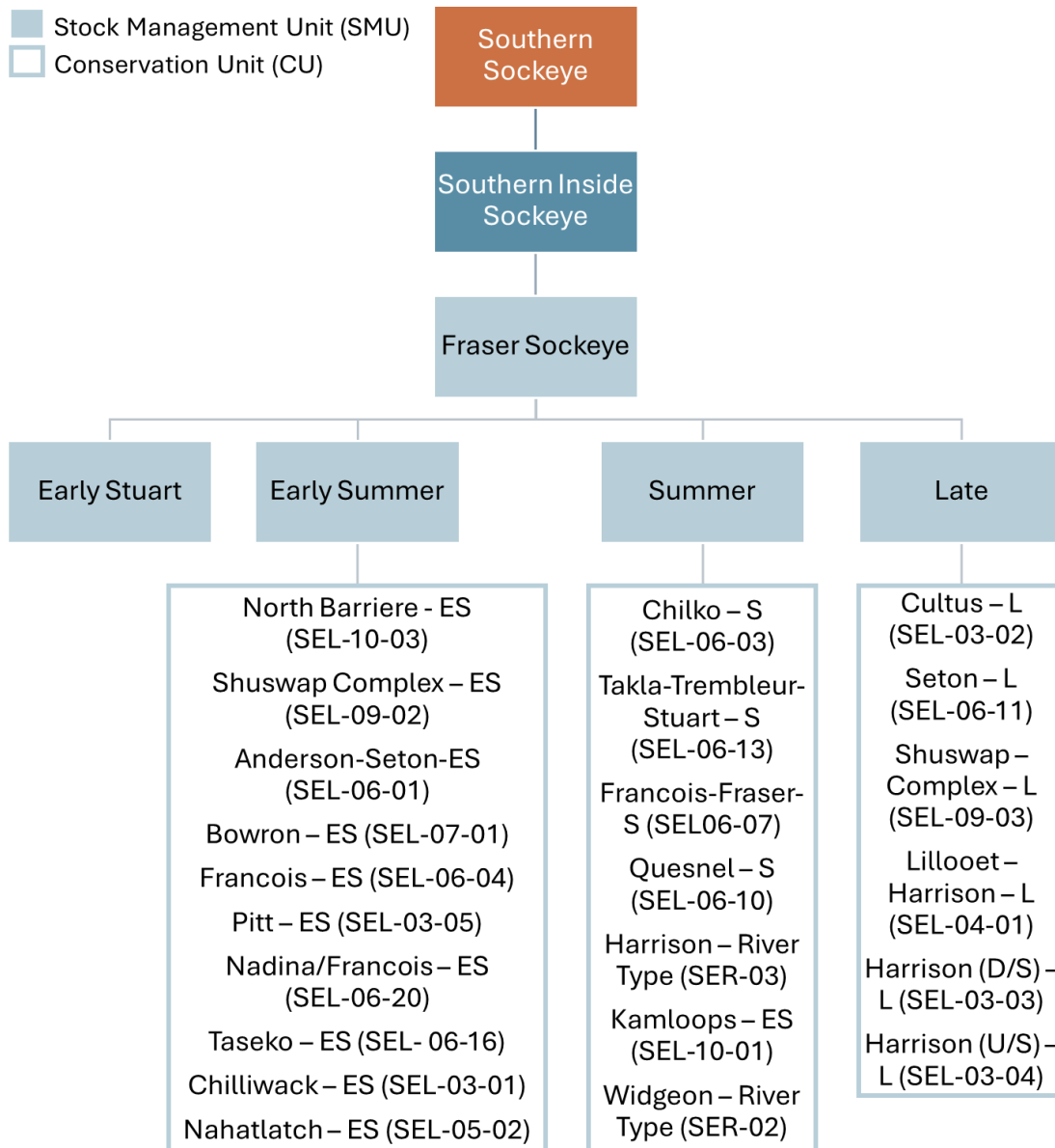
13 SOUTHERN SOCKEYE SALMON FISHING PLAN**13.5.6 FRASER SOCKEYE****13.5.6.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT**

Figure 13-29: Overview of Fraser Sockeye

13.5.6.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

In 2017, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) published an assessment and status report on 24 designatable units (DUs) of Fraser Sockeye. COSEWIC status reports are used to assign risk status to wildlife species. COSEWIC classified 8 DUs as

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Endangered, 2 as *Threatened*, 5 as *Special Concern*, and 9 as *Not At Risk* for Group 1 Assessment. The report is available online at:

https://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/virtual_sara/files/cosewic/srSockeyeSalmon2017e.pdf

In 2021, COSEWIC published an assessment and status report on 7 additional designatable units (DUs) of Fraser Sockeye (Fraser Sockeye Group 2). COSEWIC classified 2 DUs as *Endangered*, 2 as *Special Concern*, and 3 as *Extinct* for Group 2 Assessment. The report is available online at:

https://wildlife-species.canada.ca/species-risk-registry/virtual_sara/files/cosewic/sr%20Sockeye%20Salmon%202021_e.pdf

Recovery Potential Assessments (RPAs) for Group 1 Fraser Sockeye are available for Cultus Lake Sockeye (<https://cat.fsl-bsf.scitech.gc.ca/record=b4087614~S1>), and for habitat, threats and limiting factors for 9 DUs (<https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/41033371.pdf>) and their probability of achieving recovery targets (<https://cat.fsl-bsf.scitech.gc.ca/record=b4087615~S1>).

The Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS) also assessed the integrated biological status of Fraser River Sockeye Salmon CUs in 2012 and more recently in 2017 (see Section 5.3.6). The CSAS publication and Science Advisory Reports are available at:

2012: <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/349836.pdf>

2017: <http://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/40712163.pdf>

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Table 13–50: Status Evaluations for 24 Fraser Sockeye CUs – 2017 relative to 2012

2017	2012	Conservation Unit	Cyclic	Stock		
R	R	Bowron-ES	-	Bowron		
R	R	Cultus-L	-	Cultus		
R	R	Takla-Trembleur-ES	cyclic	Early Stuart		
R	R*	Taseko-ES	-	Miscellaneous Early Summers		
R	R	Widgeon – River*	-	Miscellaneous Lates		
R	A	Harrison (U/S)-L	-	Weaver		
R	UD	Seton-L	-	Portage		
R	A	R	A	Quesnel-S	cyclic	Quesnel
R	A	R	A	Takla-Trembleur-Stuart-S	cyclic	Late Stuart
A	R	Nahatlatch-ES	-	Miscellaneous Early Summers		
A	A	North Barriere-ES	-	Fennel and Miscellaneous Early		
A	A	Kamloops-ES	-	Raft and Miscellaneous Early		
A	A	G	Shuswap-ES	cyclic	Scotch, Seymour, Mis. Early Summer	
A	G*	Lillooet-Harrison-L	-	Birkenhead		
A	G	R	Nadina-Francois-ES	-	Nadina	
A	G	R	A	Chilliwack-ES	cyclic	Miscellaneous Early Summers
A	G	R	A	Francois-Fraser-S	-	Stellako
A	G	A	Anderson-Seton-ES	-	Gates	
A	G	G	Harrison (D/S)-L	-	Miscellaneous Lates	
A	G	G	Shuswap Complex-L	cyclic	Late Shuswap	
G	A	G	Pitt-ES	-	Pitt	
G	G*	Chilko-S and Chilko-ES agg.	-	Chilko		
G	G	Harrison River – River Type	-	Harrison		
DD	DD	Chilko-ES	-	Chilko		

Abbreviations: ES: Early Stuart; ES: Early Summer; S: Summer; L: Late; Mis: miscellaneous;

*Widgeon (river-type) CU has a small distribution, therefore, this CU will be consistently in the Red status zone;

Fraser River Sockeye are managed based on four management groups (Early Stuart Run, Early Summer Run, Summer Run, and Late Run). However, management actions for specific populations within the four management groups may be considered. Spawning escapement targets and harvest rules are developed annually for each management group.

The Fraser River Sockeye Spawning Initiative process was initiated in 2006 as a Wild Salmon Policy project and is used to inform longer-term escapement strategy options. Further to this, the Wild Salmon Policy 2018-2022 Implementation Plan was announced in 2018. Refer to DFO's Wild Salmon Policy website for details:

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/salmon-saumon/wsp-pss/index-eng.html>

Fisheries targeting Fraser Sockeye may also encounter some ECVI and Mainland Sockeye and Pink salmon. Terminal fisheries on ECVI and Mainland Sockeye and Pink populations are escapement-goal driven. Targeted terminal fisheries on ECVI and Mainland Pinks will be determined in-season.

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13.5.6.2.1 Pre-season

Prior to each fishing season, conservation constraints and a spawning escapement plan are determined through the Salmon Outlook, FSMB collaborations and IFMP consultations. A pre-season fishing plan is then developed by the bilateral U.S.-Canada Fraser River Panel (FRP) that takes into consideration pre-season forecasts of abundance, timing, diversion rate, and environmental conditions and/or values based on historical data. Final forecasts of timing and diversion rate are not completed until late June, after the writing of this document, and may not be included in this version.

2026 Pre-season Fraser River Sockeye Run Size Forecast

Pre-season forecasts of run size at a range of probability levels are developed for all individual Fraser Sockeye stocks, and then aggregated into the four management (run timing) groups. Fraser Sockeye run size forecasts are highly uncertain, largely due to the wide variability in annual survival rates, and observation error in the stock-recruitment data. Variability in Fraser Sockeye survival has been notable in recent decades with a record high return in 2010 and the three lowest returns on record occurring in 2019, 2020 and 2024. 2024 was the first return of both 4-year-old and 5-year-old broods affected by Big Bar (i.e., both 2019 and 2020 brood years were affected). In addition, these broods faced poor marine survival with the 2020 returns experiencing exceptionally high en-route loss due to persistently high discharge in the Fraser Canyon. In 2021 and 2025, survival improved for several stocks, more so for 2025 relative to their brood year abundance. 2026 is the dominant cycle line for Fraser Sockeye and the 2022 brood is expected to contribute the majority of the 2026 return. The dominant cycle line has been declining since 2010, with some notable declines in some stocks (e.g., Late Shuswap). 2026 is expected to have similar productivity as observed in 2022 with considerable variability at the stock level.

The retrospective analysis used to determine the top performing models for each stock was updated for the 2026 forecast and evaluates model performance from 2011 to 2024. It also represents the most recent period available for model evaluation and aligns model performance with recent productivity observations. Within the 2026 forecast distribution, recent productivity observations fall between the p25 and p50 forecast. This continues to be an important consideration for pre-season and in-season planning.

The forecast uses a suite of models, which were selected on a stock-specific basis based on their ability to predict actual returns associated with the recent stock-recruitment time series, while also considering the recovery of Big Bar affected stocks. The forecast is highly uncertain as represented by the cumulative probabilities, which largely represent uncertainty in stock survival. If survivals fall outside a stock's historical stock-recruitment time series, then returns

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could fall outside the forecast distribution. It is more appropriate to reference individual stock forecast distributions, versus the total Fraser Sockeye forecast, since not all stocks exhibit the same survival in a particular year. Therefore, the total forecast distribution of 1,953,000 to 30,600,000 at the 10% to 90% probability levels will likely under-estimate or over-estimate total returns at the ends of the probability distribution. The median or 50% probability (p50) of the total 2026 forecast distribution is 7,743,000 (there is a 50% chance the return will be at or below this value). Median forecast returns are dominated almost entirely by Summer run (56%) and Late run stocks (29%). Nadina (8%) dominates the Early Summers; Chilko (22%), Quesnel (21%), Late Stuart (6%) and Stellako (4%) dominate the Summers, with Late Shuswap (18%) and Birkenhead (8%) dominating the Late run component. Early Stuart and Early Summers comprise ~16% of the total 2026 forecast.

In recent years, with the exception of 2021 and 2025, total Fraser Sockeye have returned at or below the median forecast, with some returns at the low end (~10% probability level) of the forecast range, including the 2019 and 2020 brood years. Although returns have fallen to lower probability levels, the exact response between individual stocks has varied. In 2025, the return was higher than the median forecast, and fell in between the p75 and p90.

In response to recent and increasing variability exhibited by Fraser Sockeye stocks likely due to impacts from climate change, the Department reviews forecast model methods as part of adaptive management. DFO examines adjustments/improvements to current harvest control rules, alternative strategies that account for changing conditions and uncertainties, and what implications and advice there may be for future escapement planning. Work was completed from 2019 to 2022 through the Fraser River Sockeye Spawning Initiative (FRSSI).

Fraser Sockeye run sizes will be updated in-season through the PSC Fraser River Panel process.

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Table I3–51: 2026 Pre-season Fraser Sockeye return forecasts by stock and timing group (DFO, 2026)

Run timing group Stocks	Forecast Model	Probability that Return will be at/or Below Specified Run Size				
		10%	25%	50%	75%	90%
Early Stuart	<i>Ricker (Ei)</i>	17,000	31,200	62,700	122,500	227,500
Early Summer Total		317,500	606,600	1,163,700	2,048,800	3,211,100
Total excluding misc. stocks		298,700	524,200	965,400	1,726,600	2,849,300
Bowron	<i>RickerCyc</i>	2,800	5,700	10,400	19,500	34,900
Upper Barriere (Fennell)	<i>Ext_PowerBasicAge4.SiblingAge5</i>	2,400	4,500	9,800	20,200	38,600
Gates	<i>RickerPi</i>	4,900	9,000	16,700	32,700	58,000
Nadina	<i>Ext_RickerFRDPeakAge4.SiblingAge5</i>	205,300	348,400	620,100	1,083,400	1,690,300
Pitt	<i>LarkinBasicCycAge</i>	15,200	25,700	44,500	75,900	127,400
Scotch	<i>LarkinBasic</i>	41,600	80,900	169,500	325,300	605,700
Seymour	<i>RickerPi</i>	26,500	50,000	94,400	169,600	294,400
Misc (EShu)	<i>R/S</i>	16,400	75,700	176,700	278,900	288,700
Misc (Taseko)	<i>R/S</i>	500	1,100	3,900	5,000	5,300
Misc (Chilliwack)	<i>Ext_RickerAge4.SiblingAge5</i>	700	2,100	6,700	14,600	25,800
Misc (Nahatlatch)	<i>R/S</i>	1,200	3,500	11,000	23,700	42,000
Summer Total		1,264,400	2,259,900	4,304,700	8,685,900	16,475,400
Total excluding misc. stocks		1,263,400	2,257,800	4,300,300	8,674,200	16,454,100
Chilko	<i>Ext_RickerCycAge4.SiblingAge5</i>	603,900	999,500	1,741,700	2,943,200	4,953,300
Late Stuart	<i>R1C</i>	62,500	162,700	464,900	1,298,200	3,317,600
Quesnel	<i>R2C</i>	413,600	811,300	1,591,900	3,517,300	6,553,900
Stellako	<i>Ext_R2CAge4.SiblingAge5</i>	144,400	208,300	339,000	559,600	884,000
Harrison	<i>TSAAge3.SiblingAge4</i>	24,800	51,400	117,600	272,000	598,700
Raft	<i>PowerBasicCycAge</i>	14,200	24,600	45,200	83,900	146,600
Misc (N. Thomp. Tribs)	<i>R/S</i>	100	200	400	1,100	2,200
Misc (N. Thomp River)	<i>R/S</i>	900	1,900	3,100	9,200	17,400
Misc (Widgeon)	<i>R/S</i>	10	40	900	1,400	1,700
Late Total		354,100	869,700	2,212,200	5,471,100	10,686,400
Total excluding misc. stocks		353,700	868,500	2,187,900	5,434,700	10,640,700
Cultus	<i>PowerJuvPi</i>	400	700	1,300	2,600	4,500
Late Shuswap	<i>Ext_RickerPiAge4.SiblingAge5</i>	140,400	469,400	1,415,100	3,889,700	7,748,100
Portage	<i>RickerPi</i>	31,000	52,800	85,900	148,500	242,000
Weaver	<i>RickerCyc</i>	17,800	43,200	95,000	229,300	487,000
Birkenhead	<i>RickerEi</i>	164,100	302,400	590,600	1,164,600	2,159,100
Misc Harrison/Lillooet	<i>R/S</i>	400	1,200	24,300	36,400	45,700
TOTAL SOCKEYE SALMON		1,953,000	3,767,400	7,743,300	16,328,300	30,600,400
Total Sockeye excluding misc. stocks		1,932,800	3,681,700	7,516,300	15,958,000	30,171,600

Misc. stocks use R/EFS from a geographically similar main stock as a proxy for productivity. See forecast memo for details.

Results above 1,000 have been rounded to the nearest 1,000. Between 100 and 1,000 have been rounded to 100. Between 10 and 100 have been rounded to 10.

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2026 Pre-season Fraser River Sockeye Run Timing Curves

Preliminary run timing estimates shown in the figure below are based on historical, cycle-line (2022) median run timings. All timing estimates may be updated for pre-season planning once timing forecasts are developed for Early Stuart and Chilko Sockeye. As shown below (Figure 13–30) it is expected that there will be considerable overlap between the run timing groups in 2026.

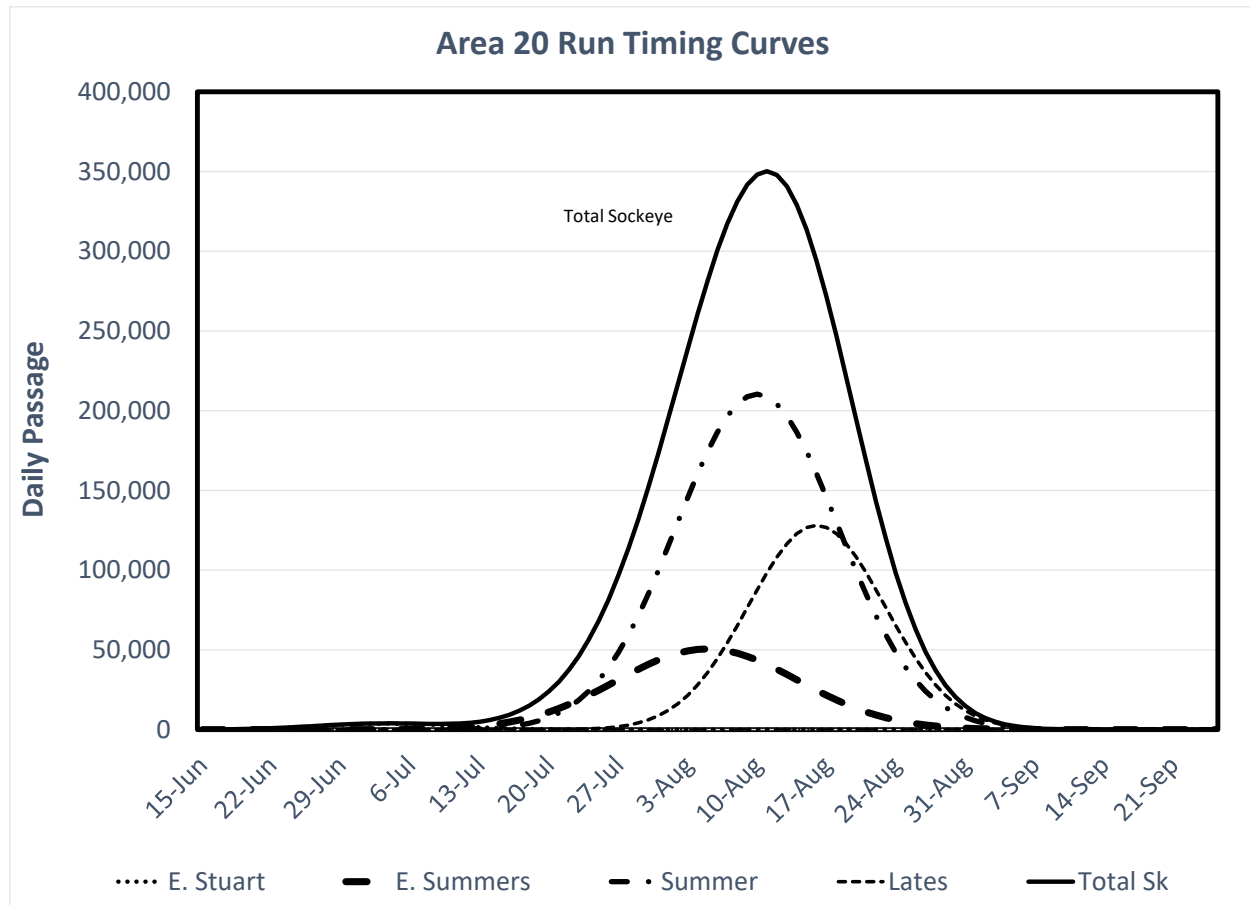


Figure 13–30: Pre-season Area 20 Run Timing Curves for 2026 Fraser Sockeye Salmon

Test fishery plans to assess in-season abundances of Fraser Sockeye are developed annually by the FRP. The plan takes into account conservation concerns for all stocks and species, assessments required for in-season management, total allowable catch and cost. The pre-season planned test fishing schedule will also be responsive to in-season information.

13.5.6.2.2 In-season

In-season information including estimates of abundance, run timing, stock composition, and other technical information are used to assess potential fishing opportunities relative to pre-season fishing plans.

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In-season information derived from catches in test and other fisheries, and in-river hydroacoustic estimates of salmon passage is provided by the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) staff to the DFO and the FRP for consideration when planning fisheries.

The FRP meets regularly from early July to late-September to review information as it becomes available over the course of the Sockeye migration. During this period, in-season information is regularly updated by the FRP to set spawning escapement objectives, management adjustments, calculate the Total Allowable Catch (TAC), and review fishing plans. The availability of the TAC to harvesters will be affected by other factors, including migration pathways and conservation requirements for co-migrating stocks or species.

In-season information including fishery openings is posted online regularly throughout the fishing season by the DFO and the PSC at the following websites:

Weekly PSC News Release:

http://www.psc.org/news_frpnews.htm

Aboriginal, Commercial and Recreational Fishery Notices:

<http://www-ops2.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>

Sockeye Test Fisheries:

- FRP approved test fishery results are available from the PSC at:
<http://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information/test-fishing-results/>
- Other test fishery results are available from DFO at:
<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/index-eng.html>

13.5.6.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Fraser Sockeye Run Timing Groups

The four run timing groups (Early Stuart, Early Summer, Summer, and Late Run) identified under the Pacific Salmon Treaty Annex IV generally contain stocks with similar migration timing in the marine approach area.

Proportional Management Adjustments & Proportional Difference Between Estimates

Proportional management adjustments (pMA) and/or proportional difference between estimates (pDBEs) may be adopted by the FRP to assist in the achievement of escapement goals. Management Adjustments ($MA = pMA \times \text{escapement goal}$) are added to the escapement goal when necessary to account for differences between Mission hydroacoustic estimates of fish

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passage (plus catch upstream of the hydroacoustics site) and spawning ground escapement estimates. That is, sometimes more fish are allowed to pass upstream of Mission (escape fisheries) than is required by the escapement goal (plus expected catch upstream of Mission) in order to achieve the escapement goal on the spawning grounds. Differences between estimates at Mission and the spawning grounds (DBEs) occur for many reasons, including measurement errors in the number of fish estimated at Mission, on the spawning grounds, caught along the way, stock ID error, en-route losses due to migration difficulties, and unaccounted for removals (e.g., predation). DBEs expressed as a proportion (pDBE) can be interpreted as the percentage of fish estimated to pass Mission that would not be expected to be enumerated by the spawning ground assessment programs, assuming no additional catch.

The pre-season pMAs shown in the escapement plan are comprised of historical median pDBEs. Prior to the start of the season in 2016, a change was made by the FRP regarding how pMAs are calculated to better reflect the pDBE of individual stocks. Within the management groups, the pDBEs for some individual stocks (e.g., Chilliwack, Pitt, Harrison, and Birkenhead type stocks) were weighted with the pDBEs from the remaining aggregated stocks in their respective timing groups over the range of forecast values. This results in different pMAs within a management group across the range of forecast run sizes. When combining pMAs and escapement goals that both change across the range of forecast run sizes, the resulting allowable exploitation rate can sometimes decrease as the run size increases. However, as expected, the total number of fish that can be harvested does increase with run size in these instances.

When forecasts or in-season information on temperature, discharge and/or timing is available, the pMA and pDBE for each management group can be adjusted based on historical relationships between the temperature and discharge or the timing of a particular run timing group, and the discrepancy between the number of fish estimated at Mission and the spawning grounds.

The Fraser Panel may update the pMAs and/or pDBEs pre-season and in-season as methods are finalized and information on environmental conditions, run timing, abundance and fish health becomes available.

Escapement Strategy

The Fraser River Sockeye Spawning Initiative (FRSSI) was undertaken to develop long-term escapement strategies for Fraser River Sockeye.

A range of harvest control rules (HCR's; also called Total Allowable Mortality or "TAM" rules) have been evaluated in the FRSSI model. An illustration of the harvest rules, taken from the Pestal *et al.* 2011 CSAS paper, is shown below.

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Each harvest or TAM rule is characterized by Lower Fishery Reference Points (vertical dashed line through the No-Fishing Point) and Upper Fishery Reference Points (vertical dashed line through the Cut-Back Point) to bound the Total Allowable Mortality (TAM) rule for each management group (Figure 13–31). The TAM cap and the Low Abundance Exploitation Rate (LAER) bound the upper and lower ranges of exploitation rates, respectively. These four values define the harvest rule for each management group in the escapement plan, and once finalized, do not change in-season. During the fishing season, in-season estimates of run size and pMAs are used in conjunction with the escapement plan to determine the total allowable harvest for a given management group at a given time. It is important to note that TAM includes both harvest mortality and the DBE (e.g., en-route loss). A harvestable surplus is identified when the run size is greater than the Lower Fishery Reference Point (escapement target) plus the MA.

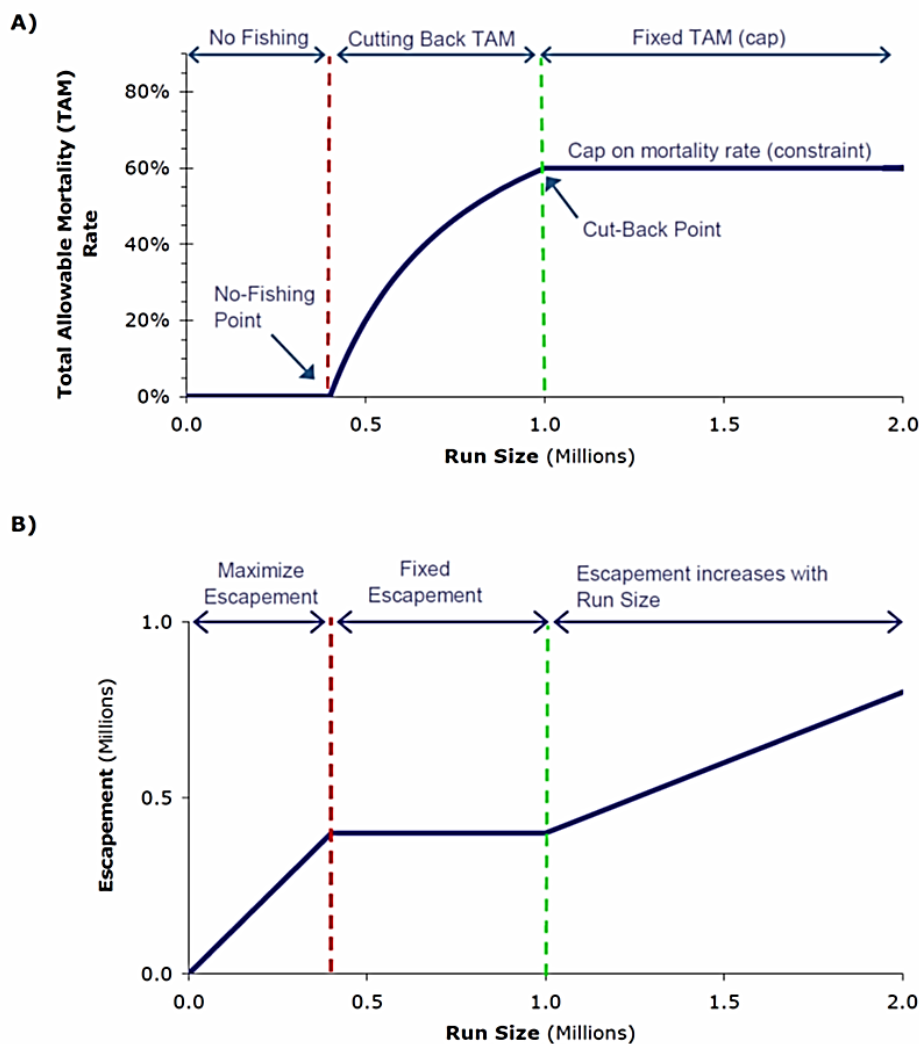


Figure 13–31: Shape of Total Allowable Mortality (TAM) rule.

Note: The Low Abundance Exploitation Rate (LAER) is applied after the TAM rule and is not shown in the figure.

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The Lower and Upper Fishery Reference Points interact with the TAM cap to describe the shape of the TAM rule. The Upper Fishery Reference Point describes the run size above which the TAM rate plateaus at the TAM cap (e.g., 60%) and the remaining proportion goes to escapement (e.g., 40% of the run at run sizes above the Upper Fishery Reference Point).

The Lower Fishery Reference Point describes the numerical escapement target when the run size is between the Upper and Lower Fishery Reference Points.

When the run size is below the Lower Fishery Reference Point plus the MA, the escapement target becomes the run size, but it is recognized that there will be some low incidental fisheries mortality in the form of low abundance exploitation rates (LAERs) to allow for fisheries directed on co-migrating stocks and species, and in some cases, some limited directed harvest when there is no opportunity for harvest directed on other Fraser Sockeye stock groups or co-migrating species. When a LAER is implemented, to the extent possible, the objective is to allow as many fish to pass to the spawning grounds while keeping the exploitation rates as low as possible.

2026 Escapement Strategy

For 2026, the Department engaged the Fraser Salmon Management Board (FSMB) and its Joint Technical Committee (JTC) to develop Fraser River Sockeye salmon escapement plan options for evaluation through the annual consultation process (Draft IFMP 2026-27). The intent was to develop escapement plan options that demonstrate a range of potential outcomes within the TAM rule framework. Operational control points (OCPs, e.g., LFRP) and TAM caps were adjusted within each option to modify the outcome while remaining consistent with the TAM rule and the precautionary approach to fisheries management. Changes to the OCP's presented were informed by previous escapement planning processes and implemented escapement plans (e.g., FRSSI, Pestal 2011, IFMP consultation, final escapement plans) as well as fishery harvest considerations during years of higher abundance.

Feedback on the proposed options varied; however, there was a general consensus to implement an escapement plan that provides increased escapement for all MUs relative to past cycle years, while providing for increased harvestable surplus at moderate and higher returns. As such, Option 3 – Hybrid was selected as the Final escapement plan for the 2026 season, however, as discussed above, fixed LAERs were selected to reduce uncertainty in harvest opportunities should MUs return at variable, relative abundancies.

The Final escapement plan increases the escapement targets (LFRPs) for all MUs relative to past cycles while maintaining similar and consistent TAM caps with a corresponding increase in the Upper Fisheries Reference Points. The revised approach for Early Stuarts described in the Draft IFMP (i.e., increasing escapement at all run sizes and limiting exploitation, without precluding

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potential harvest opportunities at very high returns) was also applied to the final escapement plan through the increased escapement target, lower LAER and consistent TAM cap. Operationally this modification to the Early Stuart escapement plan continues to address conservation concerns, while maintaining the objectives of the TAM rule.

Table 13–52: 2026 Final Fraser Sockeye Escapement Plan - Hybrid escapement plan with increased LFRPs, consistent TAM Caps and Fixed LAERs.

Management Unit	Harvest Rule Parameters				Pre-season pMA @p50
	Low Abundance ER (LAER) ^a	TAM Cap	Lower Fishery Reference Point	Upper Fishery Reference Point	
Early Stuart	10%	60%	350,000	875,000	1.08
Early Summer (w/o	20%	60%	260,000	650,000	0.59
Summer (w/o misc)	20%	60%	1,437,000	3,593,000	0.09
Late (w/o misc)	20%	60%	1,200,000	3,000,000	0.43

Under the final escapement plan, Early Stuarts are in a LAER across the full forecast range, largely a result of poor expected returns and high pre-season MAs. A small harvestable surplus is expected on Early Summers and Summers at lower returns, increasing with increasing abundance and more favorable migration conditions. Lates are expected to be in a LAER scenario at lower returns with a small harvestable surplus available at the median forecast increasing with run size.

For MUs in a LAER, the objective will be to plan fisheries directed on other stocks or species in a way that allows as many Sockeye to reach the spawning grounds as possible by minimizing Sockeye bycatch impacts. In addition, the fishery reference points shown in the above tables are evaluated for stocks that have a long-term stock-recruitment relationship. For the Early Summer, Summer, and Late Run MUs, the Lower Fishery Reference Points are scaled up to account for the expected contribution of the unforecasted, or “miscellaneous” stocks to the run timing group over the entire forecast range, and may differ slightly from those presented in the tables below. For 2026, this scaling is most consequential to the Early Summer LFRP due to the high forecasted abundance/proportion of miscellaneous Early Thompson.

2026 Escapement Projections

Table 13–54 shows the management group level, the range of expected outcomes (e.g., exploitation rates, potential available harvest, management adjustments and expected numbers of spawners to the grounds) across the abundance forecast, and fisheries reference points for each escapement option. Green shading highlights when a harvestable surplus may be available (i.e., when the forecast exceeds the escapement target plus the MA). Note that these values do not take into account the pre-spawn mortality, which can occur after adult salmon reach their spawning grounds and will be updated in season. The Department currently does not have any methods to predict pre-spawn mortality rates.

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Under the final escapement plan, projected escapements are above the long-term cycle average for Early Summers and Summer. Since 2010, Late Run Sockeye, specifically the Late Shuswap CU, have experienced below average productivity and declining returns. Escapement of Lates are projected to exceed cycle average at higher returns (above the p75). In 2022 (brood year), returns were variable with a late bump in run size occurring after much of the fisheries had past, resulting in reduced exploitation and higher escapements for some MUs. As such, 2026 projected escapements of Early Summers and Summers are slightly below brood year at median run sizes, while Lates are above.

Note the considerable variation in projected escapements at the stock level (Table 13–56), with some major stocks (e.g., Nadina, Chilko, Quesnel Late Stuart, Birkenhead) well-above cycle average, while others (e.g., Scotch, Thompson and Late Shuswap) are below. Early Stuarts are not projected to exceed brood and cycle average escapements until higher returns (near p75).

Table 13–53: Description of information shown in Table 13–54 to Table 13–55.

From Escapement Options Table		Description
	p10	run size forecast probability level being used for calculations in this column
forecast	39,000	forecast associated with p-level (above) and this management group
TAM Rule (%)	0%	total allowable mortality (TAM) at this run size forecast
Escapement Target	39,000	escapement goal at this run size
MA	34,700	management adjustment (MA=pMA x escapement target)
Esc. Target + MA	73,700	adds up escapement target and management adjustment
LAER*	10%	low abundance exploitation rate
ER at Return	0%	exploitation rate given TAM rule, run size, escapement target, & MA
Max. Allowable ER	10%	larger of the values in the two previous rows
Max. Available Harvest	3,900	harvest available for test fish, US, and Canada (=allowable ER x run size)
Performance		
Projected S (after MA)	18,600	projected adult spawners to the grounds (NOT accounting for pre-spawn mortality (PSM))
BY Spawners	48,489	number of adult spawners four years previous (compare to line above)
Proj. S as % BY S	38%	projected spawners as a percentage of brood year spawners
Cycle avg S	35,041	average number of spawners on this cycle line (NOT accounting for PSM)
Proj. S as % cycle S	53%	projected spawners as a percentage of cycle line average spawners

*The low abundance exploitation rate (LAER) is not a target. The objective of the LAER is to allow as many fish to pass to the spawning grounds as possible while allowing some limited incidental mortality, and in some cases some limited directed harvest when there is little opportunity for harvest directed on other Fraser Sockeye stock groups or species.

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Table I3–54: 2026 Final Escapement Fraser Sockeye Escapement Plan. For a description of the values in this table, refer to Table I3–53. Note: bolded columns represent median forecast values to inform pre-season planning, green shading indicates when a harvestable surplus may become available.

Management Unit		Pre-season Forecast Return				
		p10	p25	p50	p75	p90
Early Stuart	<i>lower ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	350,000	350,000	350,000	350,000	350,000
	<i>upper ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	875,000	875,000	875,000	875,000	875,000
	forecast	16,972	31,154	62,667	122,491	227,480
	TAM Rule (%)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Escapement Target	16,972	31,154	62,667	122,491	227,480
	MA	18,400	33,700	67,900	132,700	246,400
	Esc. Target + MA	35,372	64,854	130,567	255,191	473,880
	LAER	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
	Available ER at Return	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Max. Allowable ER	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
	Max. Allowable FM	1,697	3,115	6,267	12,249	22,748
	<u>2026 Performance</u>					
	Projected S (after MA)	7,300	13,500	27,100	52,900	98,300
	BY Spawners (weighted)	44,780	44,780	44,780	44,780	44,780
	Proj. S as % BY S	16%	30%	61%	118%	220%
	cycle avg S	35,682	35,682	35,682	35,682	35,682
	Proj. S as % cycle S	20%	38%	76%	148%	275%

Management Unit		Pre-season Forecast Return				
		p10	p25	p50	p75	p90
Early Summer (w/o RNT)	<i>lower ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	313,400	313,400	313,400	313,400	313,400
	<i>upper ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	783,500	783,500	783,500	783,500	783,500
	forecast (incl. misc)	317,586	606,634	1,163,677	2,048,770	3,211,095
	TAM Rule (%)	1%	48%	60%	60%	60%
	Escapement Target	313,400	313,400	465,471	819,508	1,284,438
	MA	184,900	184,900	274,500	483,400	757,600
	Esc. Target + MA	498,300	498,300	739,971	1,302,908	2,042,038
	LAER	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
	Available ER at Return	0%	18%	36%	36%	36%
	Max. Allowable ER	20%	20%	36%	36%	36%
	Max. Allowable FM	63,500	121,300	423,700	745,900	1,169,100
	<u>2026 Performance</u>					
	Projected S (after MA)	161,000	307,500	468,600	825,000	1,293,600
	BY Spawners (weighted)	545,575	545,575	545,575	545,575	545,575
	Proj. S as % BY S	30%	56%	86%	151%	237%
	cycle avg S	376,440	376,440	376,440	376,440	376,440
	Proj. S as % cycle S	43%	82%	124%	219%	344%

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Table 13-55: 2026 Escapement Plan Continued

Management Unit		Pre-season Forecast Return				
		p10	p25	p50	p75	p90
Summer (w. RNT & Har)	<i>lower ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	1,478,900	1,478,900	1,478,900	1,478,900	1,478,900
	<i>upper ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	3,697,900	3,697,900	3,697,900	3,697,900	3,697,900
	forecast	1,264,402	2,259,971	4,304,784	8,685,942	16,475,360
	TAM Rule (%)	0%	35%	60%	60%	60%
	Escapement Target	1,264,402	1,478,900	1,721,914	3,474,377	6,590,144
	MA	109,900	128,600	149,700	302,100	573,100
	Esc. Target + MA	1,374,302	1,607,500	1,871,614	3,776,477	7,163,244
	LAER	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
	Available ER at Return	0%	29%	57%	57%	57%
	Max. Allowable ER	20%	29%	57%	57%	57%
	Max. Allowable FM	252,880	652,471	2,433,170	4,909,465	9,312,116
	<u>2026 Performance</u>					
	Projected S (after MA)	930,600	1,478,900	1,721,900	3,474,400	6,590,200
	BY Spawners (weighted)	1,948,939	1,948,939	1,948,939	1,948,939	1,948,939
	Proj. S as % BY S	48%	76%	88%	178%	338%
	cycle avg S	1,007,878	1,007,878	1,007,878	1,007,878	1,007,878
	Proj. S as % cycle S	92%	147%	171%	345%	654%
Management Unit		Pre-season Forecast Return				
		p10	p25	p50	p75	p90
Late (w/o Har)	<i>lower ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	1,213,300	1,213,300	1,213,300	1,213,300	1,213,300
	<i>upper ref. pt. (w misc)</i>	3,033,300	3,033,300	3,033,300	3,033,300	3,033,300
	forecast	354,136	869,643	2,212,259	5,471,148	10,686,471
	TAM Rule (%)	0%	0%	45%	60%	60%
	Escapement Target	354,136	869,643	1,213,300	2,188,459	4,274,588
	MA	152,300	373,900	521,700	941,000	1,838,100
	Esc. Target + MA	506,436	1,243,543	1,735,000	3,129,459	6,112,688
	LAER	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
	Available ER at Return	0%	0%	22%	43%	43%
	Max. Allowable ER	20%	20%	22%	43%	43%
	Max. Allowable FM	70,827	173,929	477,259	2,341,689	4,573,783
	<u>2026 Performance</u>					
	Projected S (after MA)	207,500	504,000	1,248,300	2,238,700	4,367,200
	BY Spawners (weighted)	918,187	918,187	918,187	918,187	918,187
	Proj. S as % BY S	23%	55%	136%	244%	476%
	cycle avg S	2,503,089	2,503,089	2,503,089	2,503,089	2,503,089
	Proj. S as % cycle S	8%	20%	50%	89%	174%
Allowable Fishing Mortality (TF, US, CA)		388,905	950,815	3,340,396	8,009,303	15,077,747
Max Allowable Harvest (excl. LAER)		-	773,771	3,334,129	7,997,054	15,054,999
Total projected spawners		1,306,400	2,303,900	3,465,900	6,591,000	12,349,300

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Table 13–56 shows the projected escapement for each forecasted stock relative to the cycle average and brood year(s) total escapement, over the range of forecast probability levels (i.e., the “projected S” (after MA) from Table 13–57 are distributed to the component stocks) for each escapement option. The 2021 brood (for 5-year-olds) experienced poor returns and high en-route loss due to in-river migration challenges, while the dominant brood (2022) experienced relatively higher returns (yet lower on this cycle), higher escapements for some MUs and variable survival, noting continued poor return for South Thompson stocks. As such, some stocks throughout the forecasted range are predicted to return above cycle average yet below brood year in 2026. To better illustrate the realistic comparisons to the dominant contributing brood, the below tables use a weighted average brood (2021 and 2022) based on the forecasted 2026 age composition for the individual stock. Please note that these weighted brood comparisons are for illustrative purposes only and may not indicate the relative contributing age composition from each brood. The Department is currently exploring alternative methods to better indicate the relative brood contributions to the forecasted escapements. Overall, as described previously, the final escapement plan provides increased escapement at all run sizes (lower harvest) relative to past cycles and thus projected escapements of component stocks are also higher and projected to exceed targets at lower run sizes. However, increased escapements (i.e., increasing the LFRP) are applied at the stock level proportional to the strength of each stock within the MU, with smaller stocks increasing less and larger stocks more.

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Table 13–56: Projected Spawner Comparisons for the 2026 Fraser Sockeye Escapement Plan: Projected spawners by forecasted stock over the forecast range, applying TAM rules and historical pMAs. Colour code shows comparison of p50 abundance forecast outcomes compared to cycle average and weighted brood year escapement (green = greater than 125%, no colour = between 75% - 125%, yellow = between 25% - 74%, red = less than 25%).

Run timing group Stocks	Total Escapement		Comparisons @p10		Comparisons @p25		Comparisons @p50		Comparisons @p75	
	Cycle Ave	Brood Year	Cycle Ave	Brood Year	Cycle Ave	Brood Year	Cycle Ave	Brood Year	Cycle Ave	Brood Year
Early Stuart	35,682	44,780	20%	16%	38%	30%	76%	61%	148%	118%
Early Summer	376,440	545,575	43%	30%	82%	56%	124%	86%	219%	151%
Bowron	5,974	3,047	24%	46%	48%	94%	70%	137%	131%	256%
Upper Barriere	5,573	4,433	22%	27%	41%	52%	70%	88%	145%	182%
Gates	4,939	13,081	50%	19%	91%	34%	135%	51%	265%	100%
Nadina	29,416	329,292	351%	31%	596%	53%	843%	75%	1473%	132%
Pitt	25,746	22,469	34%	39%	58%	67%	80%	92%	137%	157%
Scotch	126,964	63,780	17%	33%	32%	64%	53%	106%	102%	204%
Seymour	102,343	29,457	13%	45%	25%	85%	37%	128%	66%	230%
Misc (EShu)	66,630	69,416	12%	12%	57%	55%	106%	102%	167%	161%
Misc (Taseko)	1,169	1,869	21%	n/a	45%	n/a	133%	83%	172%	n/a
Misc (Chilliwack)	2,738	3,524	15%	11%	43%	34%	108%	84%	234%	182%
Misc (Nahatlatch)	4,947	5,207	12%	12%	36%	34%	89%	84%	192%	182%
Summer	1,007,878	1,948,939	92%	48%	147%	76%	171%	88%	345%	178%
Chilko	437,202	886,107	102%	50%	150%	74%	159%	79%	269%	133%
Late Stuart	43,061	146,390	107%	31%	247%	73%	432%	127%	1206%	355%
Quesnel	294,686	740,527	103%	41%	180%	72%	216%	86%	477%	190%
Stellako	143,838	125,585	74%	85%	95%	109%	94%	108%	156%	178%
Harrison	74,774	40,780	24%	45%	45%	82%	55%	100%	145%	267%
Raft	5,603	3,745	186%	279%	287%	429%	323%	483%	599%	896%
Misc (N. Thomp. Tribs)	422	444	19%	18%	38%	36%	38%	36%	109%	104%
Misc (N. Thomp River)	7,121	5,086	9%	13%	18%	25%	18%	25%	52%	73%
Misc (Widgeon)	1,172	276	1%	4%	3%	11%	32%	134%	47%	200%
Late	2,503,089	918,187	8%	23%	20%	55%	50%	136%	89%	244%
Cultus	12,874	957	2%	24%	3%	42%	5%	72%	8%	108%
Late Shuswap	2,307,591	710,157	3%	11%	11%	37%	34%	109%	67%	219%
Portage	15,293	18,187	113%	95%	193%	163%	309%	259%	389%	327%
Weaver	56,400	90,418	18%	11%	43%	27%	93%	58%	163%	102%
Birkenhead	108,238	97,684	93%	103%	172%	191%	330%	365%	474%	525%
Misc. non-Shuswap	2,693	784	8%	27%	25%	84%	495%	1701%	542%	1860%

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HARVEST CONSTRAINTS INCLUDING INCIDENTAL SOCKEYE CATCH, BYCATCH, AND LAER

Although uncertain, fisheries targeting Late-run Fraser Sockeye in 2026 may be affected by conservation measures to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead (IFS). Dates and areas for rolling window closures can be found in [Appendix 7](#).

Harvest Constraints: Fishing plan options are evaluated for a range of possible Fraser Sockeye run sizes and return timing. In-season run size and timing estimates form the basis for management once these estimates are available. There is significant overlap between Fraser run timing groups as well as stocks and species of concern (e.g., Fraser Chinook, Cultus Sockeye, and IFR Coho). The overlap of one timing group may constrain harvest opportunities on another timing group and the directed harvest of one species may be constrained by another. In some cases, full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

Though a total allowable catch (TAC) may be identified for some Fraser Sockeye management groups in some years, conservation and management constraints on co-migrating stocks, management groups, or other species can affect harvest opportunities. In recent years, the less abundant Fraser Sockeye management groups (i.e., Early Stuart and Late Run Sockeye), as well as Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook, IFR Coho, and IFR Steelhead have been the primary harvest constraints when planning directed Fraser Sockeye fisheries.

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures and mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

If in-season assessment information indicates that the escapement targets in the Fraser Sockeye escapement plan are not going to be achieved, then the priority is conservation. In cases when the total allowable mortality minus any management adjustment results in a zero or very low total allowable mortality for a timing group, the Department may consider measures to protect 80-90% of the return of that Fraser Sockeye timing group, while allowing directed harvest of co-migrating stock groups or species. In the escapement plan table, this concept is expressed as the **low abundance exploitation rate (LAER)**. For example, in 2026 the LAERs range from 10% for Early Stuarts to 20% for all other Fraser Sockeye run timing groups.

The low abundance exploitation rate (LAER) is the maximum allowable ER; it is not a harvest target and may be managed to well-below the maximum value. The objective of the LAER is to allow as many fish to pass to the spawning grounds as possible while allowing some limited

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incidental mortality, and in some cases, some limited directed harvest when there is no opportunity for harvest directed on other Fraser Sockeye stock groups or co-migrating species. Fisheries are only considered if they provide scientific information necessary for conservation (test fisheries) or have reasonably low catch impacts on Fraser Sockeye. All fishery impacts, with the possible exception of SSFSC (see Section 13.5.6.4.5) including test fisheries, are to be accounted for under the LAER. Additional considerations under LAER management necessary for fishery planning include: current and projected catch accounting for all U.S. and Canadian fisheries, the distribution of impacts between gear groups, gear selectivity, release mortality rates, Sockeye mortality relative to target species, compliance with licence regulations, and environmental conditions.

For First Nations FSC fisheries, the LAER is not a harvest target, the above considerations apply, and a sharing plan may be required to enable a fair distribution of impacts between marine and Fraser River First Nations. When FSC fisheries are prosecuted using the LAER, the licence amounts by area (South Coast, Lower Fraser, Middle/Upper Fraser) are generally used to guide low impact fisheries for other species or stocks. The LAER may be used to prosecute FSC fisheries on other species or stocks while allowing some incidental mortalities to Fraser Sockeye stocks of concern. Additional considerations are afforded for Nations in terminal areas where no other salmon opportunities exist.

Early Stuart Management

The 2026 Early Stuart return represents a historically non-dominant cycle year. The main contributor to the 2026 return is forecasted to be five-year-old fish from the 2021 brood year. Similar to the management of all timing groups, the implications of the escapement strategy for Early Stuart fishing plans will be influenced by in-season run size estimates and management adjustments which may be adjusted based on water temperature and discharge conditions in the Fraser River during the return migration. Early Stuart Sockeye are expected to remain in a low abundance exploitation rate (LAER) across the entire forecast range. In recent years, window closures and other fishing restrictions have also been implemented in commercial, recreational, and First Nations fisheries to stay within the LAER objectives identified in the escapement plans. Management measures in 2026 will continue to consider the duration of the rolling window closure based on the run timing of the Early Stuart migrations through various fishing areas until their arrival at the spawning grounds.

Table 13–57 shows the approximate window closure dates to protect early-timed Sockeye stocks (i.e., Early Stuart and the early-timed Early Summer Run Sockeye). Historically, a 3-week closure has been implemented to protect >90% the Early Stuart Run. However, since 2019, a one or two week extension of the typical 3-week closure (resulting in a 4- to 5-week closure in total) has been implemented to also provide protection to weaker, early-timed stocks of the Early

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Summer Run management group (e.g., Bowron, Taseko). In 2026, the Department sought seeking feedback on a proposed 3-, 4- and 5-week window closure to provide additional protection for early-timed stocks that were impacted by Big Bar (e.g., Bowron, Taseko). Based on the feedback received, a 4-week rolling closure will be implemented in 2026. Please note that the actual closure dates and duration may be revised pre-season or in-season based on updated timing or other in-season information.

Table 13–57: Dates and durations for the 2026 Early Sockeye window closure to provide protection for Early Stuart and earlier-timed stocks of the Early Summer run Sockeye.

Area	Start Date	4-Week End Date	Management Actions ³
Areas 26-11, 27-4, 27-6, 111, 121, 123 to 127	23-Jun	21-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 21 (gillnet, troll, seine)
Area 11	23-Jun	21-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 21 (gillnet, troll) or July 25 (seine) ^{1,2}
Area 12	23-Jun	21-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 21 (gillnet, troll) or July 25 (seine) ^{1,2}
Area 13	23-Jun	21-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 21 (gillnet, troll) or July 25 (seine) ¹
Areas 14 to 16	23-Jun	21-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 21 (gillnet, troll) or August 15 (seine) ¹
Areas 17, 19, 20 and 21	23-Jun	21-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 21 (gillnet, troll, seine)
Areas 18 and 29	28-Jun	25-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 25
Steveston-Mission Bridge	28-Jun	25-Jul	
Mission Bridge-Sawmill Cr	30-Jun	27-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 27
Sawmill Cr-Texas Cr	3-Jul	30-Jul	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before July 30
Texas Cr-Kelly Cr	3-Jul	30-Jul	
Kelly Cr-Deadman	3-Jul	30-Jul	
Deadman-Chilcotin	9-Jul	5-Aug	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before August 5
Chilcotin-Quesnel	9-Jul	5-Aug	
Quesnel-Hixon	9-Jul	5-Aug	
Hixon-Prince George	11-Jul	7-Aug	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before August 7
Prince George-Stuart R	13-Jul	9-Aug	No Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries on or before August 9, except for potential First Nations FSC harvest in terminal areas.

Note: dates are based on pre-season Area 20 peak run timing forecasts. Exact dates are subject to change based on in-season run timing.

¹ Gear restrictions remain in place to protect Sakinaw Sockeye until July 25 (Queen Charlotte and Johnstone Straits - Areas 11 to 13) and August 15 (northern Strait of Georgia - Areas 14 to 16) unless the early-timed window extends beyond those dates.

² Additional sockeye closures will remain in place in portions of Areas 11 and 12 until late July in waters north of Lewis Point to protect Nimpkish Sockeye.

³ Management actions described here are just for Fraser River Sockeye-directed fisheries. Any fisheries directed on other stocks or species in the areas and times described may also have measures to limit impacts on Fraser-bound Sockeye (e.g., gear restrictions in licence conditions).

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Early Summer Management

Forecasted returns for stocks within the Early Summer management group are variable, generally above average for this cycle line, but comprise only ~15% of the total median forecast. Nadina is the largest contributor to the Early Summer MU (53%) followed by Scotch and Early Shuswap at 15%, with many stocks comprising <1%.

Based on the final escapement plan, the pre-season forecast range and long-term median MAs, directed harvest opportunities on Early Summers are anticipated to be modest at the median forecast and increase with increasing abundance; Early Summers will be in LAER at the lower end of the forecast (p10). However, harvest of Early Summer Sockeye may be constrained by the Early Sockeye Window Closure and in-season run timing.

Summer Run Management

In 2026, Summer run Sockeye comprise approximately 56% of the total forecasted return, and unlike previous dominant cycle years, comprise a notably higher proportion than Lates (56% vs 29%). Chilko and Quesnel are the largest contributors to the Summer MU (40% and 37%, respectively) and combined, comprise a significant portion of the overall 2026 forecast (43%). Based on the final escapement plan, pre-season forecast range and long-term median MAs, Summers are anticipated to be in a harvestable surplus across most of the forecast range, with the amount of harvest increasing considerably at higher run sizes. Harvest opportunities may be constrained by less abundant co-migrating groups (Early Summers and Lates), migration conditions and stocks of concern (e.g., Fraser Chinook, Cultus Lake Sockeye, Interior Fraser River Coho).

Late Run and Cultus Lake Sockeye Management

2026 is the dominant cycle line for Late run Sockeye; however, recent returns have been below forecast, with the 2026 Late run forecast being one of the lowest forecasted dominant returns in recent years. These low returns are being driven largely by low returns for Late Shuswap; however, other cycle lines (e.g., 2025) have seen some of the highest returns for the same stocks. Late run Sockeye comprise approximately 29% of total forecasted return in 2026, with Late Shuswap being the largest contributor to the MU (64%) followed by Birkenhead (27%) at the median forecast.

Historically, the ocean migration timing of Late run Sockeye was similar to Summer run Sockeye; however, Late run Sockeye typically delayed entering the Fraser River by 4 to 6 weeks. Beginning in the mid-1990s, Late run Sockeye entered the Fraser River much earlier and experienced very high levels of en-route and/or pre-spawn mortality. More recently, the trend towards longer periods of delay and later river entry timing appears to be returning. While a

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range of studies have been undertaken to understand the cause and impact of this phenomenon, no causal factors have been identified. Planning for 2026 may take timing into consideration, specifically when calculating in-season management adjustments for this group.

Based on the final escapement plan, the pre-season forecast range and long-term median MAs, directed harvest opportunities on Lates are anticipated to be limited at the median forecast, increasing considerably at higher returns. Lates are likely to be in a LAER at lower forecast (p25); however, harvest opportunities will be affected by river entry timing and associated in-season management adjustments. Late run Sockeye may also be indirectly harvested in fisheries targeting Summer run Sockeye and may be subject to constraints on co-migrating stocks of concern such as Cultus Lake Sockeye, Interior Fraser River Coho, Interior Fraser River Steelhead, and Fraser River Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂ Chinook.

Cultus Lake Sockeye

Management of Cultus Lake Sockeye will be informed by the Cultus Lake Sockeye recovery objectives and an assessment of in-season information for the Late Run Sockeye MU. For more information on the recovery objectives, refer to Section 6 of the IFMP under Fishery Management Objectives for Stocks of Concern.

Due to the very low numbers of Cultus Lake Sockeye compared to co-migrating stocks, the abundance and exploitation rate specifically for Cultus Lake Sockeye cannot be calculated directly. For management purposes, the Cultus abundance, exploitation rate and en-route mortality are assumed to be the same as those for similarly timed Late run stocks caught seaward of the confluence of the Fraser and Vedder rivers (e.g., Late Shuswap). Exploitation rates are based on DNA analysis of Sockeye sampled either directly from fisheries or indirectly, from nearby test fisheries. En-route mortality estimates are based on the Late run management adjustment which may be updated in-season.

Assessment of the Cultus population shown in Table 13–58 is sensitive to assumptions about en-route and pre-spawn mortality. Assuming the average estimated pre-spawn mortality (PSM) since the early upstream migration of Late run began in 1996 (approximately 40%), the Late Run (excluding Birkenhead) pDBE, and the p25 to p75 forecast abundance range, the short-term minimum recovery Objective 1 (see below and Section 6.6) are unlikely to be met in 2026, regardless of exploitation rate. In addition, managing Cultus and/or Lates to a 0% ER would effectively eliminate most Sockeye harvest in Canadian waters in 2026. The values in the table are the maximum exploitation rate permissible for Late run Sockeye based on the final escapement plan. In-season, these maximum exploitation rates for Cultus Sockeye may be higher or lower than indicated, due to interactions between run size, management adjustment, pre-spawn mortality, Late run escapement plan and Cultus recovery objectives. These

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exploitation rates are not intended to be used as management targets and in-season fishery management planning will take into account a range of considerations including updated assumptions based on in-season information as well as objectives for other Fraser Sockeye management groups and/or other stocks/species. Table 13–58 shows how the projected successful spawners compared across the middle forecast range, with pre-season assumptions of en-route and pre-spawn mortalities. Objectives 3 and 4 are longer-term objectives and the performance of Cultus in relation to these objectives is not being assessed annually in the IFMP. Table 13–58 illustrates the potential differences in outcomes based on varying levels of exploitation, including a zero percent (no harvest) scenario. For this table, brood stock removals are set at 200 adults, which is the objective in 2026.

Table 13–58: Assessment of Cultus Lake Sockeye population performance, based on the escapement plan, a range of pre-season run sizes and management adjustments to account for en-route losses.

2026 projected Cultus successful spawners

run size	p25 711			p50 1,264				2,569			
exploitation rate (ER)	20%	10%	0%	22%	20%	10%	0%	43%	20%	10%	0%
pDBE	-0.28										
projected adults to the fence	410	461	512	710	728	819	910	1,054	1,480	1,665	1,850
brood stock (excluded from calculations)	200										
potential wild spawners	210	261	312	510	528	619	710	854	1,280	1,465	1,650
pre-spawn mortality (PSM)*	40%										
projected successful adult spawners	130	160	190	310	320	370	430	510	770	880	990

Cultus Management Objectives - projected 2026 evaluation

Management Objectives	value	p25							p75			
1a. 4 year avg successful spawners **		307	314	322	352	354	367	382	402	467	494	522
> 1000		no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
1b. minimum 500 in each year (2023-2026)***		no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
2a. 4 year avg > previous 4 year avg	> 186	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
2b. current year > brood year	> 521	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes

* PSM value of 40% used in these calculations are based on the average PSM since 1996, some of which were not directly attained through stock assessment programs - see note below

** successful spawners estimates are highly dependent on PSM assumptions, which can be difficult to assess due to difficulties in retrieving Cultus sockeye carcasses after spawning

***spawners >500 in 2025

shaded cells denote the projected maximum ER under the Final escapement plans

Because conditions for fry survival in Cultus Lake continue to be extremely poor, enhancement is focused on producing hatchery smolt releases that will bypass the use of the lake, thereby improving freshwater survival. Broodstock collection will continue in 2026, with a primary release strategy of 50,000 smolts to be released into Sweltzer Creek near the outlet of Cultus Lake in the spring of 2028. Alternative fry programs that release juveniles into Cultus Lake in 2027 will take place only if additional enhancement rearing capacity is achieved through facility improvements.

13.5.6.4 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.5.6.4.1 First Nations Fisheries

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

Food, social and ceremonial (FSC) fisheries in the Fraser River, including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10, could be affected by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures. A 27-day rolling window closure will be applied to FSC fisheries according to the times and areas outlined in [Appendix 7](#). These measures will not extend to marine FSC fisheries.

Actual opportunities and catches will be dependent on, among other factors: in-season stock strength, management measures taken to ensure conservation of individual stocks, community needs of First Nations, and alternative sources of salmon if preferred species are not available locally due to low abundance. For these reasons, in some cases, groups may not be able to harvest their full shares. FSC fisheries will be planned to maximize the use of selective gear types and reduce bycatch where possible.

DFO is working with the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) Nation to implement the BC Supreme Court's declaration of an Aboriginal right to fish for food in the south arm of the Fraser River. Refer to Table 10-1 - Communal Licence Harvest Target Amounts in Southern BC/Fraser River First Nations Fisheries.

Specific Conservation Measures for First Nations Fisheries

Early Stuart Sockeye

Refer to Section 13.5.6.3 and LAER for details.

Cultus Lake and Late Run Sockeye

Refer to Section 13.5.6.3 and LAER for details.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under this licence, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by this vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing

harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Fraser River and Tributaries

Catch monitoring programs are managed through Activity Funding or Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements.

In the lower Fraser River (below Sawmill Creek), monitoring programs implemented vary between Nations but typically include landing site or vessel based collection of catch and effort information paired with validation of effort by vessel patrols or overflights. Catch reports are received by DFO from catch monitoring programs on a weekly basis, within 48 hours of a fishery closing.

For fisheries on the Fraser watershed above Sawmill Creek, catch monitoring programs typically range from basic census type to more enhanced programs that include collecting effort and catch rate information in creel sample programs.

Treaty Fisheries

Treaty fisheries in the Fraser River, including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10, could be affected by the IFR Steelhead conservation measures. A 27-day rolling window closure will be applied to Treaty fisheries according to the times and areas outlined in [Appendix 7](#). These measures will not extend to marine Treaty fisheries.

Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) Fisheries (Domestic)

The domestic allocation for Sockeye salmon under the Tsawwassen First Nations Final Agreement (TFN FA) is as follows:

- When the Canadian Total Allowable Catch (CTAC) for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon is 500,000 or less, 1.0% of the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon;
- When the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon is greater than 500,000 and less than 3.0 million, then 5,000 Fraser River Sockeye Salmon plus 0.40904% of that portion of the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye that is greater than 500,000 and less than 3.0 million; and
- When the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon is equal to or greater than 3.0 million, then 15,226 Fraser River Sockeye Salmon.

The monitoring program for TFN Domestic fisheries includes fisher logs supplemented by validations of catch and effort through on-water patrols and/or observations of landings.

Details of monitoring programs in place can be found in the Tsawwassen First Nation Fisheries Operational Guidelines (TFN FOG).

Tla'amin Fisheries (Domestic)

The Domestic allocations for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon under the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjɪnxʷegəs) are as follows:

- In any year, the Tla'amin Fish Allocation for Sockeye Salmon is: a number of Fraser River Sockeye Salmon equal to:
- When the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon is less than or equal to 2.0 million, 0.5% of the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon; or
- When the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon is greater than 2.0 million and less than or equal to 6.5 million, 10,000 Fraser River Sockeye Salmon plus 0.1% of that portion of the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon that is greater than 2.0 million and less than or equal to 6.5 million; or
- When the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon is greater than 6.5 million, 14,500 Fraser River Sockeye Salmon plus 0.048% of that portion of the CTAC for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon that is greater than 6.5 million.

The Tla'amin Nation provides catch reports to the Department through the Aboriginal Harvest Management System (AHMS). The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing time period, location of harvest, harvest count by species, harvest effort, and biological samples.

Maa-nulth Fisheries (Domestic)

The domestic allocation for Sockeye Salmon under the Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement is an amount of Fraser River Sockeye Salmon equal to 0.13366% of the Fraser River Sockeye Salmon Canadian Total Allowable Catch.

The Maa-nulth First Nations provide electronic catch reports to the Department. The information recorded on catch reports includes the gear type, fishing dates, location of harvest, species harvested, harvest effort, and catch (in pieces).

Five Nations (Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations) Multi-species Fishery

Five Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations located on the west coast of Vancouver Island – Ahousaht, Ehattesaht, Hesquiaht, Mowachaht/Muchalaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht (the five Nations) – have an

Aboriginal right to fish for any species, with the exception of Geoduck, within their court-defined fishing territories and to sell that fish. For further information please see Section 10.3.1.

The five Nations Multi-species fishery for Fraser River Sockeye will not be affected by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures.

13.5.6.4.2 Recreational Fisheries

Recreational fisheries in the Fraser River (including Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10) will be affected by the IFR Steelhead conservation measures, amongst other closures. A 42-day rolling window closure will be applied to recreational fisheries according to the times and areas outlined in Table 13–59 and in [Appendix 7](#). These measures will not extend to marine recreational fisheries.

Table 13–59: Interior Fraser River Steelhead Rolling Window Closure Dates for the Recreational Fisheries.

Fishery Location	Start	End
Area 29: 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10	19-Sep	30-Oct
Mouth to Port Mann Bridge	19-Sep	30-Oct
Port Mann Bridge to Mission	21-Sep	1-Nov
Mission to Hope	22-Sep	2-Nov
Hope to Sawmill Creek	26-Sep	6-Nov
Sawmill Creek to Lytton (Thompson Confluence)	28-Sep	8-Nov
Lytton to Texas Creek	1-Oct	11-Nov
Texas Creek to Kelly Creek	3-Oct	13-Nov
Kelly Creek to Deadman Creek	6-Oct	16-Nov
Deadman Creek to Chilcotin River	9-Oct	19-Nov
Chilcotin River	12-Oct	22-Nov
Thompson River – Thompson Confluence to Bonaparte	1-Oct	11-Nov
Thompson River – Bonaparte River to Kamloops Lake	5-Oct	15-Nov

Opportunities for targeted Fraser River recreational Sockeye fisheries will be determined based on in-season assessment and abundance of Fraser River Sockeye stocks. Sockeye non-retention will be in effect in most South Coast waters until such time as in-season information indicates a total allowable catch of Fraser Sockeye.

In years when recreational opportunities are available, Fraser Sockeye fisheries typically take place in August and September once a commercial TAC is identified, and updates are provided

via Fishery Notice and on the recreational fisheries website: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/index-eng.html> The normal daily limit is four Sockeye in marine waters and two Sockeye in non-tidal waters. In some cases, recreational fisheries may be reduced or closed due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season (e.g., poor migration conditions). Due to conservation concerns for other species of Fraser River salmon, Sockeye opportunities may be delayed or forgone. Refer to Section 13.5.6.3 and LAER for details.

As part of the 2026 Chinook management measures, Fraser River recreational fisheries will remain closed to salmon fishing until regulated open. Opportunities for species other than Chinook will be informed by in-season abundance and other conservation issues (IFR Coho, IFR Steelhead, etc.). As noted in Section 13.1, if these fisheries proceed, there may be no fishing for Chinook Salmon if stocks of concern may be encountered. Reduced fishing opportunities may be provided in tributary areas during times and locations where at-risk Chinook stocks would not be encountered and where abundance of the target species permits.

For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for SRKW and reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions promote foraging for SRKW within key foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. These measures are outlined in Section 5.4.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Marine Waters

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the Internet Recreational Effort and Catch (iREC) reporting program, are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information for this fishery. South Coast stock assessment staff use these programs to provide annual estimates of the recreational effort and harvest in each area.

Fraser River and Tributaries

Creel surveys are conducted in portions of the lower Fraser River and select tributaries in order to estimate recreational catch and effort for the times and areas surveyed. Typically, the creel survey in the lower Fraser River mainstem begins when the river is opened to recreational salmon fishing; however, recently the survey end date has trended toward the end of November as the mainstem opening has trended later in the year. The creel surveys conducted on the Chilliwack River and Nicomen-Norrish recreational fisheries have remained relatively stable over the last number of years both in times and areas surveyed (generally, Chilliwack is surveyed from mid-September to mid-November and Nicomen-Norrish is surveyed from early October to the end of November).

Catch monitoring programs in the Fraser watershed upstream of Alexandria will range from fisher-reported catch to highly-intensive creel surveys; however, some times and areas are unmonitored. Expected effort and catch, harvest rates, potential bycatch, and any biological sampling requirements are taken into account when planning the catch monitoring program for these areas.

13.5.6.4.3 Commercial Fisheries

Over the years, additional mitigation measures were implemented in this fishery to increase protection for stocks of conservation concern. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of fisheries where additional mitigation measures were implemented.

Conservation measures to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead will affect Fraser Sockeye fisheries if fisheries persist late in the season. Dates and areas for rolling window closures can be found in [Appendix 7](#).

In 2025, a review of the Interior Fraser River Steelhead Window Closure boundary in portions of Area 29 was conducted to look at harmonizing Subareas in Area 29 in order to streamline fishery management while continuing to protect IFR Steelhead. This approach would also simplify management of the fishery in the terminal fishing area. Fleets managed according to the 27-day and 42-day window closures will be provided the opportunity pre-season to choose if they would like to follow the harmonized approach, or follow the dates and areas identified in [Appendix 7](#). This harmonized approach provides additional protection to IFR Steelhead. If a group chooses to fish the harmonized approach for a fishery on the front end of the harmonized window closure, then the window closure will also apply on the later end of other fisheries (i.e., Fraser Sockeye/Pink fisheries at the start of the window closure, and Fraser Chum fisheries at the end of the window closure).

Area 29 Harmonized Window Closure

The harmonized window closure is a combined fishing area comprised of PFMAs 29-3, 29-4, 29-6 and portions of 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10 (Figure 13–32). The purpose of the harmonized window closure is to maintain fishing opportunity in the Strait of Georgia while aligning with the intent of the IFR Steelhead rolling window closure. Fraser Sockeye and Fraser Pink fishing opportunities within the harmonized fishing area would end September 23 for troll gear and September 16 for net gear while Fraser Chum fishing opportunities within the harmonized area would commence October 21 for troll gear and October 29 for net gear (Table 13–60). No fishing opportunities would occur from September 24 to October 20 for troll gear and from September 17 to October 28 for net gear.

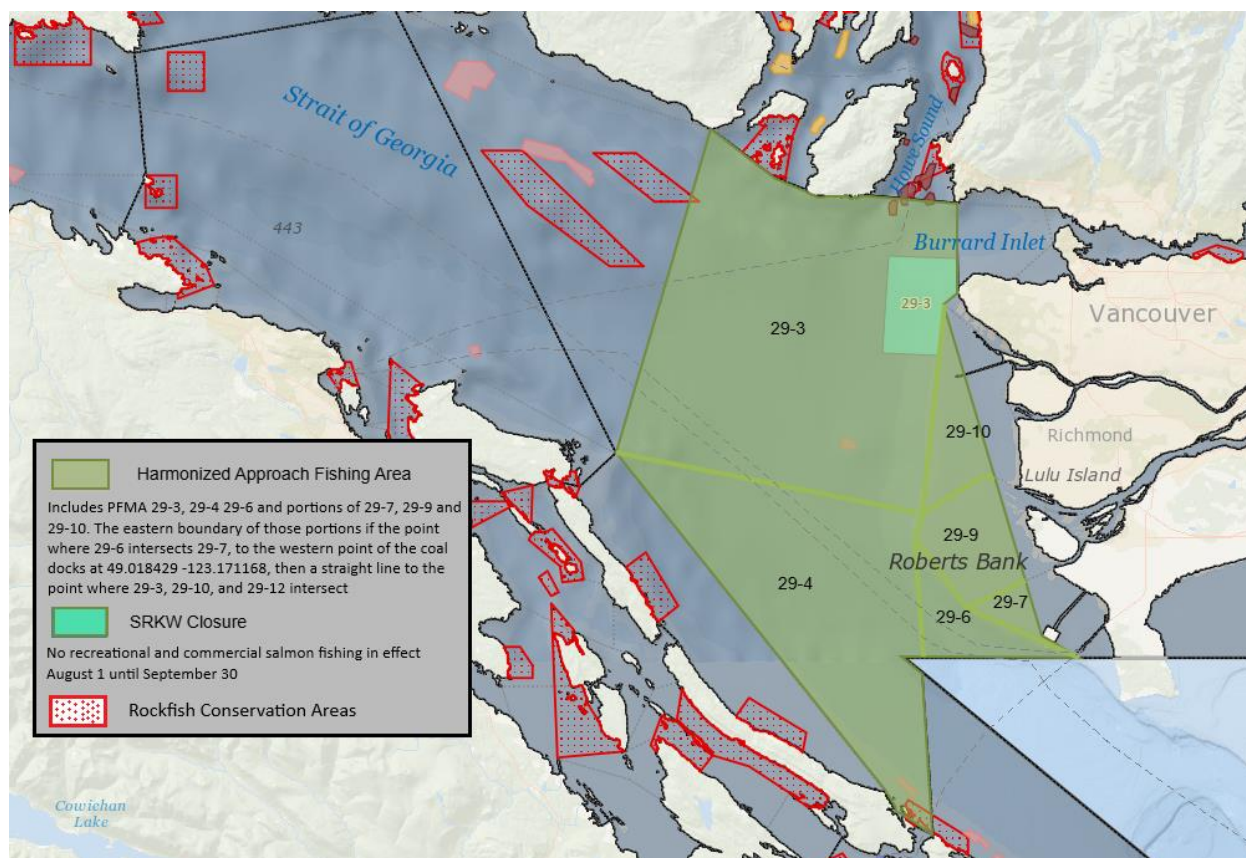


Figure 13–32: Map of the harmonized fishing area in PFMA 29-3, 29-4, 29-6 and portions of 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10

Table 13–60: Overview of the original troll and Interior Fraser River Steelhead Rolling Window Closure Dates for portions of PFMA 29.

		27-day (troll gear) window closure		42-day (net gear) window closure	
		Start	End	Start	End
Original	Area 29-1 to 29-5	Sep 23	Oct 19	Sep 16	Oct 27
	Area 29-6, 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10	Sep 26	Oct 22	Sep 19	Oct 30
Proposed Harmonized Area	Area 29 Harmonized Area	Sep 24	Oct 20	Sep 17	Oct 28

Commercial fisheries for Fraser River Sockeye may occur both in the marine approach waters and within the Fraser River and tributaries. In the marine waters, these commercial fisheries include the Area B Seine and the Area H Troll Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) fisheries, and the Area D Gill Net full fleet competitive (derby) fishery. Additionally, in years with large returns, Area G Troll fishing opportunities on the West Coast of Vancouver Island and in Queen Charlotte Strait may be considered. Within the Fraser River and tributaries, commercial fisheries include the Area E Gill Net Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) fishery, along with First Nations economic opportunity (EO) and demonstration fisheries. There may also be consideration for escapement surplus to spawning requirement (ESSR) fisheries in terminal areas.

Potential openings for Fraser River Sockeye commercial fisheries will be determined by in-season assessment and abundance of Fraser River Sockeye stocks. Fishing opportunities will be subject to achieving fisheries management objectives for constraining stocks and species of concern (i.e., Early Stuart Sockeye, Late Run Sockeye, Cultus Lake Sockeye, Nimpkish Sockeye, Sakinaw Sockeye, IFR Coho, IFR Steelhead, and Fraser River Spring 4₂ and Spring/Summer 5₂ Chinook) in areas where they are present. Even if fishing opportunities are available, in some cases full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

Allocation

Table 13–61: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South – Fraser – Small Return Years	11 to 20, 29, 121, 123 to 127	48.5%	21.6%	25.1%	0.0% ^d	4.8%
South – Fraser – Large Return Year (e.g. 2018, 2022, 2026)	11 to 20, 29, 121, 123 to 127	48.015%	21.384%	24.849%	1.0% ^d	4.752%

Notes on Sockeye allocation (south):

^d a 1% share to occur in large Fraser River return years only. A 1% reduction will be proportionately applied across other fleets in those years.

Commercial Fraser River Sockeye Fisheries

All opportunities will be based on in-season assessment and stock abundance information, subject to achieving fisheries management objectives for constraining stocks and species of concern (i.e., Early Stuart Sockeye, Cultus Lake Sockeye, Nimpkish Sockeye, Sakinaw Sockeye, IFR Coho, IFR Steelhead, and Fraser River Spring 4₂ and Spring/Summer 5₂ Chinook). All fisheries in all areas are closed until the moving window closure to protect early-timed Fraser Sockeye (Table 13–60) is lifted.

Queen Charlotte Strait, and Johnstone Strait (Areas 11, 12, and 13)

Table 13–62: Fishery management plans and time/area restrictions for each gear group in Areas 11, 12 and 13

	Area 11	Area 12	Area 13
Area B Seine	• ITQ fishery • Late July to Early September • Closed until July 25 to protect Sakinaw Lake Sockeye • No fishing opportunities above Lewis Point prior to late July to protect Nimpkish River Sockeye		
Area D Gill Net	• Open, competitive (derby-style) fishery • Late July to Early September • Closed until July 25 to protect Sakinaw Lake Sockeye • No fishing opportunities above Lewis Point prior to late July to protect Nimpkish River Sockeye		
Area H Troll	N/A	• ITQ fishery • Late July to Late August • Closed until July 25 to protect Sakinaw Lake Sockeye • No fishing opportunities above Lewis Point prior to late July to protect Nimpkish River Sockeye	
Area G Troll	• Open, competitive (derby-style) fishery • Opportunities are available in years of large returns based on commercial allocation agreements and will be planned for 2026 • Late July to Early September • Closed until July 25 to protect Sakinaw Lake Sockeye • Opportunities only available in Subareas 12-5 to 12-16		N/A

West Coast Vancouver Island (Areas 111, 121 to 127)

Table 13–63: Fishery management plans and time/area restrictions for Area G troll in Areas 111, 121 to 127

	Areas 111 and 121 to 127
Area G Troll	• Open, competitive (derby-style) fishery • Opportunities are available in years of large returns based on commercial allocation agreements and will be planned for 2026 • Late July to Early September • Additional SRKW measures are outlined in Section 5.4

Strait of Georgia (Areas 14 and 16)

Table 13–64: Fishery management plans and time/area restrictions for each gear group in Areas 14 and 16.

	Area 14	Area 16
Area B Seine	• ITQ fishery • Mid-August to Early September • Closed until August 15 to protect Sakinaw Lake Sockeye • Consideration may be given for fisheries in portions of Area 14 and Area 16 (Sabine Channel) • Catch monitoring and sampling would be required	
Area H Troll	N/A	• ITQ fishery • Mid-August to Early September • Closed until July 25 to protect Sakinaw Lake Sockeye • New for 2026: In 2025 Fraser Sockeye fisheries, Area H Troll expressed interest in harvesting Fraser Sockeye in Area 16. In 2026, this fishery may occur subject to management constraints, including window closure to protect Early Stuart Fraser Sockeye. If implemented, the fishery would be expected to occur in August. Catch monitoring and sampling would be required.

Juan de Fuca Strait, and Fraser River (Areas 18, 20, 29 and Fraser River)

The Fraser River Panel in conjunction with DFO and First Nations will develop and implement Fraser River Sockeye fishing plans for these areas, as they fall within Fraser River Panel management responsibilities.

Table 13–65: Fishery management plans and time/area restrictions for each gear group in Areas 18, 20, 29 and in the Fraser River.

	Area 18	Area 29 and Fraser River	Area 20
Area B Seine	• ITQ fishery • Mid-August to Early September • Additional SRKW measures for Areas 18, 20 and 29 are outlined in Section 5.4		
	N/A	• In-river demonstration fishery • Additional monitoring requirements are outlined in Appendix 5A	• Additional monitoring requirements are outlined in Appendix 5
Area E Gill Net	N/A	• ITQ fishery • Mid-August to Early September • Additional SRKW measures for Area 29 are outlined in Section 5.4 • Fishing opportunities considered in tidal waters and off the Fraser River mouth • Fisheries constrained by IFR Coho window closure date (Section 13.3.2.4)	N/A
Area H Troll	• ITQ fishery • Mid-August to Early September • Additional SRKW measures for Areas 18 and 29 are outlined in Section 5.4		N/A

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting includes the following:

- Overflights may be conducted to estimate vessel effort in Area D Gill Net openings; and counts of Area B Seine and Area H Troll vessels may also be collected when they are present in the fishing area.
- On-grounds monitoring in portions of Areas 12 and 13 may be conducted through a combination of DFO patrols and DFO-funded charter patrols, subject to available resources.
- Vessel counts conducted to verify number of vessels (effort) in each Area E Gill Net opening.

- On-water observer coverage (on-grounds charter patrol and DFO roving catch monitoring coverage) in each Area E Gill Net openings to conduct net haul observations and gather independent information on encounters of target and non-target species.
- Mandatory requirement to file fishing reports in all commercial fisheries, including “Start/Pause/Cancel/End” Fishing reports.
- Mandatory catch reporting by phone-in with a paper harvest log and electronic transmission with an electronic harvest log (E-log). Catch reporting requirements are specific to each licence group and are detailed in the conditions of licence for each gear type.
- 100% dockside catch validation for Area B Seine, Area E Gill Net and Area H Troll ITQ fisheries.
- Partial independent on-board/at-sea observer coverage for Area B Seine and Area H Troll fisheries in areas where species and stocks of concern are present (e.g., Areas 16, 20, 29).

South Coast Fraser Sockeye Demonstration Fisheries

Area B Seine, Area E Gill Net, and Area H Troll Fraser River Sockeye Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Demonstration Fishery

Please see [Appendix 5](#) for more information on the Area B Seine, Area E Gill Net, and Area H Troll Fraser Sockeye ITQ demonstration fishery guidelines for 2026.

This demonstration fishery will be similar to the quota based ITQ Fraser River Sockeye fishery that was planned for 2009-2025. Note that a separate demonstration fishery proposal is provided for a demonstration – experimental Area B Seine fishery in the Lower Fraser River.

Area B Seine Fraser River Sockeye Demonstration (ITQ) Fishery in the Lower Fraser River

This demonstration fishery proposal is similar to the proposal that was provided by Area B to DFO in 2010.

The purpose of this experimental fishery project is to demonstrate the effectiveness of harvesting Fraser River Sockeye Salmon within the confines of the Fraser River, employing the selective capabilities of a purse seine and secondly to capitalize on the ability to continue the harvest of Sockeye Salmon that may not be available in marine areas due to other constraints.

This fishery would be managed as part of the Area B Seine and H Troll demonstration ITQ fishery for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon.

Region:

- Lower Fraser River Area

Participants:

- All Area B Seine licence holders will be eligible. However, as this is an experiment, effort controls will be in place to limit participation to a maximum of eight to ten vessels fishing on any given day.

Location of Fishery:

- Area 29 in-river: Area B has indicated there are a number of potential locations around New Westminster, Glenrose, the Cement Plant and down to the Deas Tunnel that would be suitable for seining and would for the most part, be out of the shipping lanes.

Gear Type:

- Seine gear using shallow seine nets, the use of power skiffs and selective fishing measures are mandatory and are specified by licence conditions.

Timeframe:

- This fishery is planned to occur when Fraser River Sockeye Canadian Commercial TAC is identified. It is anticipated that this experimental fishery would take place sometime within the time period of mid-August to early September.
- Consideration of other fisheries in the area will be taken into account when planning Area B in-river fishing activities. Specific fishing times would be confirmed in-season through an integrated planning process. The amount of available fishing days for this experiment will be confirmed in-season.
- This fishery will be subject to constraints due to the IFR Steelhead rolling window closure.

Allocation:

- For this experimental fishery to proceed, it will require available Fraser River Sockeye CCTAC. The harvest from this fishery will be part of the Area B and H Fraser River Sockeye ITQ demonstration fishery. The quota share will be expressed as a percentage of the CCTAC.
- As this is an experimental fishery, there will be a cap on the total allowable harvest in this fishery and the amount will be confirmed in season. The target species is Sockeye Salmon, retention of Pink Salmon may be permitted; there will be non-retention of all other species.

Monitoring Plan:

- As per the Area B and H Fraser River Sockeye demonstration ITQ fishery, start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reports will be required by phone-in or electronic logbook. There is a requirement for 100% dockside validation of the catch at designated off-loading locations.
- There will be a requirement for observer coverage on all vessels participating in this fishery. In addition to monitoring catch, observers will be available to collect any DNA sampling that is required and identified.

13.5.6.4.4 Fraser First Nations Commercial Sockeye Harvest

Since 2021, additional mitigation measures were implemented in this fishery to increase protection for stocks of conservation concern. See [Appendix 6](#) for a complete list of fisheries where additional mitigations measures were implemented.

Conservation measures to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead will affect Fraser Sockeye fisheries if fisheries persist late in the season. Dates and areas for rolling window closures can be found in [Appendix 7](#).

Opportunities for targeted Fraser River Sockeye fisheries will be determined based upon in-season assessment and abundance of Fraser River Sockeye stocks. Fishing opportunities will also be subject to achieving fisheries management objectives for constraining stocks and species of concern (i.e., Early Stuart Sockeye, Cultus Lake Sockeye, Nimpkish Sockeye, Sakinaw Sockeye, IFR Coho, IFR Steelhead, and Fraser River Spring 4₂, Spring 5₂, and Summer 5₂ Chinook) in areas where they are present. Even if fishing opportunities are available, in some cases full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

Demonstration Fisheries

Discussions regarding demonstration fisheries that will provide commercial opportunities for First Nations and allow for continued testing of inland fisheries will occur in season. As in previous years, the focus for First Nations demonstration fisheries will be on experimenting mainly in terminal areas on abundant stocks. These fisheries will be conducted separately from FSC fisheries, under comparable rules to the commercial fishery and fish harvested will be off-set with licences voluntarily relinquished from the commercial fishery.

Even if fishing opportunities are available, in some cases full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

Upper Fraser Indigenous Sustainable Harvesters (UFISH) – In-River Sockeye Fisheries

The UFISH Commercial Fishing Enterprise focuses on viable and sustainable fishing practices. Discussions are on-going with partners based on the viability of individual fisheries. The 2026 demonstration fishery will build on previous years' experiences to implement successful fisheries and address constraints and challenges to harvesting allocations, marketing, processing and acquiring infrastructure required for the emerging inland fisheries.

Participants: UFISH Partnership – Northern Shuswap Tribal Council (NSTC); Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG)/Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government; Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC); Lheidli T'enneh First Nations (LTFN)

North Shuswap Tribal Council

Location: Quesnel River, Quesnel Lake, Chilcotin River and mainstem Fraser

Gear Type: Beach seine, purse seine, dip nets, and fish wheels

Time Frame: Fishery will target Summer run (Quesnel / Chilko / Late Stuart / Nechako Rivers) Sockeye. Potential start date is August 16 for a six-week fishery

Tsilhqot'in National Gov't / Xeni'Gwet'in First Nations Government

Location: Chilko River, Chilko Lake and Chilcotin River and mainstem Fraser

Gear Type: Beach seine, purse seine, dip net, partial weir/fish trap, and fish wheel

Time Frame: Fishery will target Summer run (Quesnel / Chilko / Late Stuart / Nechako Rivers) Sockeye. Potential start date is August 16 for a three- to four-week fishery

Carrier Sekani Tribal Council and Lheidli T'enneh First Nations

Location: Fraser River, Fraser Lake and other suitable locations identified by the parties

Gear Type: Beach seine, dip net, partial weir/fish trap, and purse seine

Time Frame: Fishery will target Summer Run (Late Stuart/Stellako) Sockeye. Potential start date is August 15 for a four week fishery.

- NOTE: All fishery time frames are estimates and final dates will be determined based on in-season migration timing and abundance information.

Allocation: All fisheries described above

- Allocation to be determined but will be expressed as a percentage (%) share of Commercial Total Allowable Catch (CCTAC) of Fraser Sockeye stocks in the area utilizing relinquished licences from the PICFI program.

Monitoring Plan: All fisheries described above

- Fishery will be monitored using designated landing sites, electronic logbook system (ELOG) and validation of catch at either landing site or plant.

Adams Lake Band, Skeetchestn Band and other partners TBD – Sockeye Fisheries

Adams Lake Band and Skeetchestn Bands are a First Nations communities of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council (SNTC) society. The 2026 demonstration fishery is likely to occur due to a dominant Sockeye run. Adams Lake Band and Skeetchestn Band will build on previous year's experiences and expand their knowledge and abilities to participate in larger scale fisheries. Fishery expectations are to target late run Sockeye with non-retention of South Thompson 41 Chinook and Interior Fraser River Coho salmon. Bycatch that cannot be released live may be identified and retained for food, social and ceremonial purposes subject to dual fishing guidelines.

- **Participants:** Adams Lake Band, Skeetchestn and other partners to be determined
- **Location of Fisheries:** Little Shuswap Lake, South Thompson River and Kamloops Lake.
- **Gear Type:** Sockeye Fishery – Shallow purse seine directed on Sockeye if CCTAC becomes available.
- **Time Frame:** NOTE: All fishery time frames are estimates and final dates will be determined according to in-season migration timing information. Sockeye Fishery: Fishery will potentially target Early Summer, Summer and Late Run Thompson Sockeye; potential start date of Aug 22 for a six-week fishery ending Sep. 23 or longer with selective fishing methods
- **Allocation:** Sockeye Fishery: Sockeye allocation will be expressed as a percentage (%) share of Commercial Total Allowable Catch (CCTAC) of Fraser Sockeye in-season utilizing relinquished licences from the PICFI program.
- **Monitoring and Reporting Plan:** Fishery will be monitored using designated landing sites, independent validation of catch at the processing plant and independent validation of releases when required. Reporting may include electronic logbook system (ELOG).

Harrison-Fraser River Demonstration Fishery

Region: Lower Fraser Area

Participants: Sts'ailes and Scowlitz First Nations

Location of Fishery: The waters of the Harrison River located between the outlet of Harrison Lake downstream to the orange boundary signs labelled 'Fishing Boundary HFA' approximately 1,000 meters below the CN Railway Bridge; and the waters of the Fraser River bounded on the west by a line from a white boundary sign on the upstream side of the Fraser River at the mouth of the Sumas River, thence true north to a white boundary sign on the opposite shore and bounded on the east by the downstream side of the bridge across the Fraser River at Agassiz.

Gear Type: Set nets, drift nets or beach seines. Beach seines not to exceed a maximum mesh size of 2 ¾ inches and a length of 50 fathoms or 360 feet.

Allocation:

- Sockeye: To be determined but will be expressed as a percentage (%) share of Canadian Commercial Total Allowable Catch (CCTAC) utilizing relinquished licences from the PICFI program.

Time Frame: All fishery time frames are estimates and final dates will be determined according to in-season migration timing information.

- Sockeye: This fishery would be planned to take place once a Fraser River Sockeye Canadian Commercial TAC is identified, potentially late July/early August to early September.
- Fraser Chinook: Fraser Chinook bycatch retention may be permitted subject to abundance.

Monitoring Plan: During any set net or drift net fishing activity, the fishers will transport their catch to a predetermined Sts' ailes/Scowlitz landing site to have their catch monitored. During any beach seining activity, a monitor must be present with every beach seine crew during all fishing activity and provide set-by-set updates to the Sts' ailes Fishery Manager, before the beach seine crews deploy their next set to ensure there is TAC available. The Harrison Fishing Authority will collect all catch statistics via these monitors and report this information to DFO immediately after the fishery closes.

Harvest Agreements

Even if fishing opportunities are available, in some cases full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.

Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) Fisheries (Commercial)

In addition to the allocation of salmon for domestic harvests, TFN has an allocation for commercial catch outside of the Treaty as identified via the Tsawwassen First Nation Harvest Agreement (TFN FA). Fishing undertaken via the TFN Harvest Agreement (HA) will be comparable to the requirements of the current Fraser River commercial fishery (First Nations economic opportunity (EO) fishery), or a general commercial fishery (e.g., Area E). TFN harvesters will be expected to operate under the same rules that apply to other fishers taking part in that Fraser River commercial fishery.

Sockeye Salmon allocation under the Harvest Agreement: 0.78% of the Commercial Allowable Catch for Fraser River Sockeye Salmon for that year.

The monitoring program for TFN HA fisheries includes a mandatory landing program using 2 to 4 landing sites at which all fishers must land and have their catch validated and is supplemented by effort validation by vessel patrols. If selective gear is used (e.g., purse seines, modified shallow seine, fish trap), monitors must be present during all fishing activity to record catch information on a set-by-set basis.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Lower Fraser

In the Lower Fraser, catch monitoring programs are managed through Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements. While details will be finalized prior to fisheries occurring; the monitoring programs in place for 2026 are expected to be similar to recent years as follows:

Non-selective (e.g., gill net) EO fisheries will be monitored using a mandatory landing program with packer and land-based sites. All fishers must land their catch at these sites and have their catch validated. This program is supplemented by effort validation by vessel patrols and overflights.

Selective (e.g., beach seine and purse seine) EO fisheries require monitors to be present during all fishing activity to record catch and release information on a set-by-set basis.

13.5.6.4.5 Fraser Sockeye Single Stock FSC Fisheries

In previous IFMPs, terminal and single stock selective FSC Sockeye fisheries were referred to as Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirements (ESSR)-FSC fisheries (A specific type of ESSR); however, in response to IFMP feedback, the name has been changed to Fraser Sockeye Single Stock FSC (SSFSC) fisheries.

SSFSC fisheries for individual Fraser Sockeye spawning populations may be considered if the projected number of spawners is expected to exceed the freshwater productive capacity of the system, measured as Spawners at Maximum Sustainable Yield, taking into account migration and environmental conditions. Stock-specific spawning requirements may be determined based upon WSP benchmarks, traditional ecological knowledge, and stock-specific information, on a system-by-system basis upon receipt of a terminal access request. Given uncertainties about freshwater capacity, a decision on whether a terminal fishery will proceed will be made in consultation with local First Nations, and any amounts specified for harvest may take into account available information and associated uncertainties on a range of factors including: stock-specific abundance, projected spawner abundances, productive capacity of the system, stock composition in the proposed fishing area and selectivity of fishing gear.

Given the uncertainties of in-season information, the Department may permit only a portion of any estimated surplus to be harvested. **Even if fishing opportunities are available, in some cases full harvest targets may not be harvestable due to conservation concerns and management considerations that are identified in-season.**

Please also note that the Department is working with Nations to explore alternative strategies and language to evaluate terminal and single stock selective Sockeye fisheries where abundance permits. This work will continue throughout 2026 and updated in future IFMPs.

Table 13–66: Potential framework to determine in-season harvest levels for SSFSC fisheries on one terminal stock.

Fishery Type	Stock and In-season Assessment Method	In-season Assessment	In-season Assessment Uncertainty		Terminal Harvest Level
Terminal Enhanced (hatchery or spawning channel)	Weaver- Fishway Gates- Fishway Nadina- Fishway Horsefly- Fishway	* Escapement Complete Count	Low	High	>50%
Terminal Wild	Scotch- Fence Quesnel- Sonar Stellako- Sonar Birkenhead- Sonar	* Escapement Complete Count	Low	Medium-High	26-50%
	Upper Barriere- Visual Misc North Thompson- Visual Raft- Visual	**Escapement Index Count	Medium	Medium	11-25%

Fishery Type	Stock and In-season Assessment Method	In-season Assessment	In-season Assessment Uncertainty		Terminal Harvest Level
	Chilliwack- Escapement Projection Chilko- Escapement Projection Pitt- Escapement Projection Late Stuart- Escapement Projection Late Adams- Escapement Projection Seymour- Escapement Projection Harrison- Escapement Projection	*** In-season Run Size Estimate	High	Low	0-10%

* Complete terminal escapement count (i.e., fence count, fishway count, hydroacoustic count (DIDSON)). Low uncertainty associated with this type of escapement estimate.

** Escapement index count (i.e., hydroacoustic count (DIDSON), visual count. Medium uncertainty associated with this type of escapement estimate.

*** In-season run size estimate- Estimate provided in-season in the Fraser Panel process. Escapement projections would consider projected catch above Mission and in-season estimates of the difference between the Mission hydro acoustic estimates and post season spawning ground estimates. High uncertainty associated with the escapement projections.

**** Actual assessment methodologies to be determined in-season.

13.5.7 EAST COAST VANCOUVER ISLAND AND MAINLAND SOCKEYE

13.5.7.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT

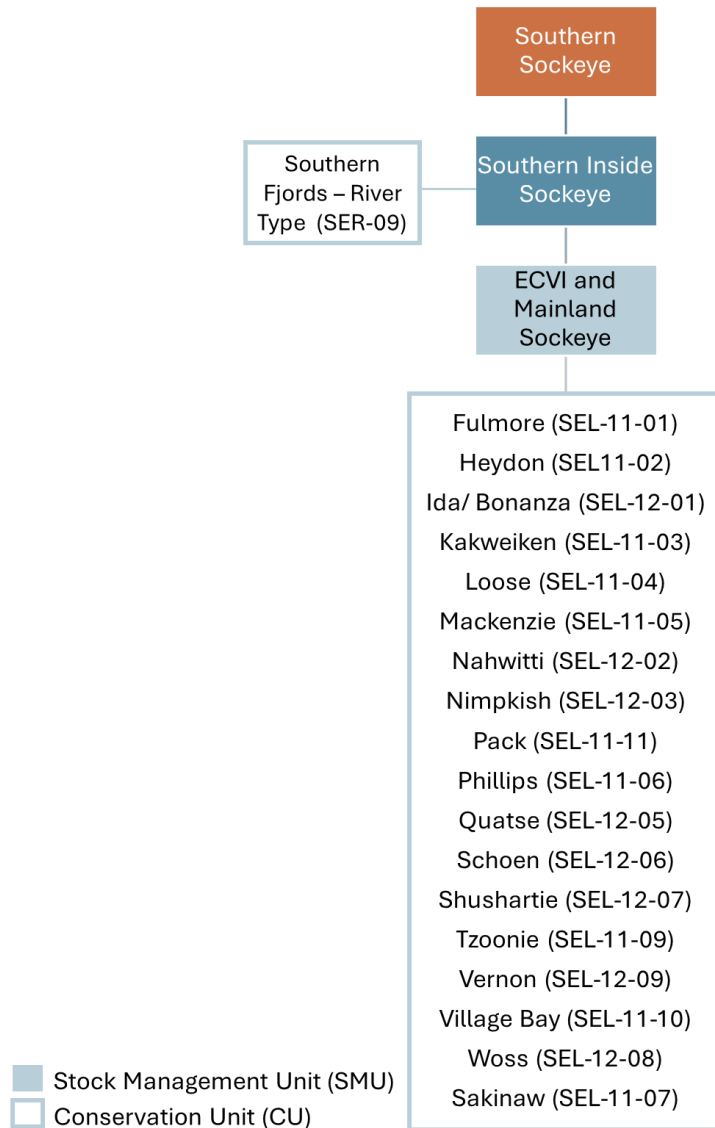


Figure 13–33: Overview of East Coast Vancouver Island and Mainland Sockeye

13.5.7.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.5.7.2.1 Pre-season

Table 13–67: ECVI and Mainland Sockeye 2026 Salmon Outlook

Outlook Unit	2026 Outlook
Areas 11-13	Outlook Category ‘2’. No systems are assessed in Area 11. For the 2026 return, the two main contributing brood years are 2021 (adults) and 2022 (adults), the abundances of which are unknown due to extreme high water during the 2021 and 2022 migrations. For the 2026 return, the two main contributing smolt years are 2023 and 2024. Recent escapement to nearby systems from Coho and Pink Salmon are encouraging, and may indicate that marine conditions are improving. Nimpkish Sockeye returns are biased towards 4 year old fish (57%), but the 5-year-old component can also be strong. Improved marine survival in other species, and a strong Nimpkish Sockeye return in 2024 and 2025 indicate that returns may be better than expected. We anticipate average returns. Expectations for Quatse, Heydon and Phillips are similar to Nimpkish.
Sakinaw	Outlook Category ‘1’. Of the 138,479 smolts that left Sakinaw Lake in 2023, a total of 308 adult Sockeye returned in 2025. Marine survival for both clipped and not clipped fish combined was higher (0.22%) than the 8 year average of 0.10%. Returns from an experimental release of Sakinaw smolts at Big Qualicum were approximately 3.4x higher at 0.93% suggesting a localized survival bottleneck may exist. Smolt production was above average in 2024 with 113,503 migrants estimated. If marine survival is near the previous 6-year average for the 2024 ocean entry cohort, a total of 167 adults are expected in 2026.

13.5.7.2.2 In-season

Historically, many of these Sockeye populations were assessed visually by fishery officers, charter patrol, and stock assessment personnel. In recent years, escapements have been consistently monitored for four populations: Quatse River, Heydon Creek, Nimpkish River and Sakinaw River.

The Quatse River Sockeye population has been estimated using a DIDSON acoustic system since 2006. With the installation of a new resistivity fence on the Quatse system, it is anticipated

that future estimates will be provided from that program with a few years of DIDSON calibration.

Heydon Creek Sockeye enumeration program was reinstated in 2018 (previously monitored 2000-2012). This program is conducted in partnership with the Wei Wai Kum First Nation and involves monitoring Sockeye migration through an existing fence. The operations that were suspended due to Covid resumed in 2021. The program will be fully operational for 2026.

The Nimpkish River Sockeye escapement has been estimated through a standardized swim survey program from 2002 until 2015. Since 2015, the 'Namgis First Nation has worked in partnership with DFO to enumerate Sockeye in the lower portion of the Nimpkish River using a DIDSON system and a deflection fence. In recent years, operations have been delayed or suspended due to extreme high flows, but in 2024 and 2025, the fence was operational for the entire migration period. The spring of 2025 marks the first time the new enumeration fence was operational, and we observed 117,108 Sockeye. This represents an above average return for this system. This program will be improved and will continue in 2026.

In 2021, a new program was put in place to evaluate the Fulmore Lake Sockeye escapement in partnership with the Tlowitsis Nation and the A-Tlegay Fisheries Society. This project will continue in 2026.

Sakinaw Lake Sockeye have been closely monitored since the early 1950s when a dam and fishway/trap were constructed. Early adult escapement assessments were conducted by DFO Fisheries Patrol Officers. Departmental changes resulted in decreased monitoring in the 1990s and by the late 1990s the population had declined to very low levels. After COSEWIC listed the stock as *Endangered*, DFO Stock Assessment and SEP programs and the shíshálh Nation restored the monitoring activity and reduced illegal fishing activities. Both smolt (trap and bucket counts, then digital video) and adult Sockeye (digital video) have been enumerated since 2003. This intensive assessment methodology provides very accurate estimates of abundance, and also provides the adipose fin clip rate (used to identify hatchery origin fish) for further evaluation of freshwater survival rates of hatchery releases, number of natural smolts per spawner and enhanced contribution to the total return (marine survival rates of both hatchery and natural Sockeye). New tools such as Parentage Based Tagging (PBT) and Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags have been incorporated into recent assessments.

13.5.7.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

There are no commercial or recreational fisheries directed on these Sockeye planned for 2026. However, there may be some small directed First Nations FSC harvests that could occur on some of these stocks.

13.5.7.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO SOUTH LOCAL SOCKEYE FISHERIES

Fisheries are structured to reduce the impacts on Sakinaw Lake Sockeye and Nimpkish Sockeye in mixed-stock areas. Harvest measures continue to be required to minimize impacts on Nimpkish Sockeye. In order to protect this stock, time and area closures may be implemented for First Nations, commercial, and recreational fisheries in the approach waters to the Nimpkish River (including the river). With the exception of test fisheries, marine waters north of Lewis Point on Vancouver Island (Subareas 11-1, 11-2, and 12-5 to 12-19) are scheduled to be closed to Sockeye retention in all fisheries until late July. However, marine waters north of Lewis Point may be open to Sockeye retention in First Nations FSC fisheries prior to late July if in-season abundance of Nimpkish Sockeye is higher than expected and no other weak stock constraints exist.

Further constraints to fisheries may include harvest restrictions based on in-season returns of Early Stuart, Early Summer, Summer and Late Run (including Cultus) Fraser River Sockeye.

13.5.7.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

13.5.7.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

First Nations FSC fisheries harvest-related measures will continue in 2026 to ensure protection of Sakinaw Lake Sockeye. First Nations fisheries in Johnstone Strait will be restricted to gill net and troll only until July 25 and until August 15 in the northern Strait of Georgia. Furthermore, moving window closures to protect Early Stuart Sockeye and potentially additional closures to protect early-timed Early Summer run Sockeye can limit or delay the start of Sockeye-directed FSC fisheries. The waters near the mouth of Sakinaw Creek in Area 16 will be closed to all fishing all season. First Nations fisheries targeting ECVI and Mainland Sockeye will not be impacted by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures.

Food, Social and Ceremonial

The Department continues to work in partnership with the 'Namgis First Nations on the development of a lower river assessment program for Nimpkish Sockeye. This program will work towards providing a much earlier indication of Sockeye abundance in the Nimpkish River and help to develop a First Nations FSC harvest plan. If in-season abundance permits, some First Nations FSC harvest may occur in the Nimpkish River.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Fishery monitoring will be conducted by DFO and the First Nations under Fisheries Agreements if applicable. First Nations are asked to keep records of harvest and provide catch information to DFO in a variety of formats. Under this licence, if a commercial vessel is used for fishing, First Nations are asked to provide information respecting the species and quantity of fish harvested by this vessel, to the DFO Catch Reporting Officer within 24 hours from landing harvested catch. In addition, catch reporting timelines for First Nations fisheries are outlined in Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements and/or Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences. Where in-season management requires, catch reports are sought weekly during the respective fishing season.

Treaty Fisheries

Treaty fisheries targeting ECVI and Mainland Sockeye will not be impacted by 2026 IFR Steelhead conservation measures.

Tla'amin (Domestic)

The Domestic allocations for terminal Sockeye Salmon under the Tla'amin Treaty (ʔaʔjɪnxʷegəs) are as follows:

- In any year, the Tla'amin Fish Allocation for Sockeye Salmon is:
A number of Sockeye Salmon equal to 25% of the Available Terminal Harvest for the Sockeye Salmon stocks that originate from a Terminal Harvest Area, other than Fraser River Sockeye Salmon stocks, if the Minister determines that there is an Available Terminal Harvest for those stocks.

13.5.7.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

There are no directed recreational fisheries for ECVI and Mainland Sockeye populations. For southern B.C. tidal waters, Sockeye non-retention will be in effect in times and areas when stocks of concern are present. Updates to recreational fisheries will be provided in-season via Fishery Notice. In all ECVI and Mainland non-tidal waters, Sockeye non-retention is in effect year-round.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Catch monitoring programs including creel surveys, logbooks and the internet recreational effort and catch (iREC) reporting program are the main tools used to capture recreational catch and effort information in this fishery.

13.5.7.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

Allocation

For southern B.C. tidal waters, Sockeye non-retention will be in effect during those times and in those areas when stocks of concern are present. There are no directed commercial fisheries for ECVI and Mainland Sockeye populations. Updates to commercial fisheries will be provided in-season via Fishery Notice. In non-tidal waters, Sockeye non-retention is in effect year-round.

Table 13–68: Commercial Allocation Implementation Plan for the 2015–current period

Description	Areas	Seine B	Gill Net D	Gill Net E	Troll G	Troll H
South - Fraser	11 to 20, 29, 121, 123 to 127	48.5%	21.6%	25.1%	0.0% ^a	4.8%

Notes on Sockeye allocation (south):

^a a 1% share to occur in large Fraser River return years only. A 1% reduction will be proportionately applied across other fleets in those years.

East Coast Vancouver Island and Mainland Commercial Sockeye Fisheries

There are no commercial Sockeye harvest opportunities for ECVI and Mainland Sockeye populations. Commercial fisheries target Fraser River Sockeye stocks and opportunities are subject to achieving fisheries management objectives for constraining stocks which includes Nimpkish and Sakinaw Sockeye.

East Coast Vancouver Island and Mainland First Nations Commercial Sockeye Harvests

There are no First Nations commercial harvests for ECVI and Mainland Sockeye populations.

13.5.7.5.4 Excess Salmon to Spawning Requirement Fisheries

There are no ESSR fisheries for these populations.

13.5.8 OKANAGAN SOCKEYE

13.5.8.1 SNAPSHOT OVERVIEW AND MAP OF MANAGEMENT UNIT



Figure 13–34: Overview of Okanagan Sockeye

Okanagan Sockeye is the last remaining viable Sockeye Salmon population returning to Canada within the Columbia River watershed. Run timing into the Okanagan system is primarily affected by water temperature within the Okanagan River. Okanagan Sockeye tend to hold in the Columbia River until migration conditions are favourable. Peak spawning usually occurs from mid- to late October. On average, approximately 60% of all Okanagan River Sockeye enumerated at Wells Dam on the Columbia River are accounted for on the spawning grounds in Canada (i.e., ~40% en-route loss).

13.5.8.2 STOCK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

13.5.8.2.1 Pre-season

The total pre-season forecast for Okanagan Sockeye Salmon is 184,000. This estimate is the return to the mouth of the Columbia River and is not adjusted for survival to the spawning grounds.

Recreational and commercial fisheries may be considered if abundance permits.

13.5.8.2.2 In-season

Assessment of returns is done via counts of escapement past dams located on the Columbia River in the United States. Spawning ground assessments are done on an annual basis by the Okanagan Nation Alliance fisheries staff and are comprised of visual/dead recovery surveys to determine spawner abundance in the Okanagan River and Skaha Lake system.

13.5.8.3 DECISION GUIDELINES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The current escapement goal for Okanagan Sockeye salmon was set at 35,500 based on Hyatt and Rankin's (1999) study, but that target has since been exceeded in 14 of the past 22 years for the Osoyoos Lake population alone (2004-2025). Improvements in water management, changes in stock assessment, habitat restoration, and range reintroduction due to improved fish passage have fundamentally changed the structure of the stock. Therefore, it no longer reflects the capacity of the habitats available to Sockeye salmon in the Okanagan basin. Updated Science advice provided in 2024 identified new candidate target escapement goal ranges for the Okanagan Sockeye SMU of 96,000-135,000 based on spawners at maximum sustainable yield (S_{MSY}) and 192,000-231,000 spawners that maximizes recruits (S_{MAX} ; corresponding to full use of the available spawning habitat). Time for development and consultations are needed to establish new decision rules for the management of Canadian Okanagan Sockeye fisheries over the longer term. In the interim, the Department is considering using decision rules for 2026-27, that would be similar to the approach taken in 2025/26 and in recent years.

The spawning objective of 35,500 fish as enumerated on an indexed section of the spawning ground is equivalent to approximately 61,200 fish enumerated through Wells Dam on the Columbia River in Washington State.

Based on the above, the following decision rules will be used to manage Okanagan Sockeye in Canada in 2026:

- If projected escapement past Wells Dam on the Columbia River is less than 10,000 Sockeye, limited fishing for FSC purposes is permitted by Okanagan Nation.
- If projected escapement past Wells Dam is between 10,000 and 60,000 fish, an Okanagan Nation FSC catch of 5% of the run that has migrated past Wells Dam is permitted.
- If projected escapement past Wells Dam exceeds 60,000 fish, an Okanagan Nation FSC minimum catch of 10% of the run that has migrated past Wells Dam is permitted.
- Should the projected escapement past Wells Dam exceed 80,000 fish, additional opportunities may be considered.

13.5.8.4 INCIDENTAL HARVEST, BYCATCH AND CONSTRAINTS TO OKANAGAN SOCKEYE FISHERIES

Fisheries are managed to avoid incidental capture of Okanagan River Chinook.

13.5.8.5 ALLOCATION AND FISHING PLANS

Allocations are described above in the Decision Guidelines and Management Actions section.

13.5.8.5.1 First Nations Fisheries

Food Social and Ceremonial

The Okanagan Nation Alliance opportunities to harvest salmon for food, social and ceremonial purposes are provided through a communal licence negotiated annually with DFO. This licence provides the details of the FSC fishery.

Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting

Okanagan Nation Alliance uses a variety of methods to estimate FSC harvests. Current methods include video monitoring, roving creel monitors, catch card reporting and phone interviews.

13.5.8.5.2 Recreational Fisheries

Recreational fisheries will take place if the Wells Dam counts indicate spawning escapement and FSC requirements could be met. The allowable catch will be determined in-season based on Sockeye counts over Wells Dam and movement of fish into Osoyoos Lake. This fishery takes place on Osoyoos Lake.

A creel survey utilizing access sites and boat patrols are conducted capturing effort, landed catch and release data during the fishery. The survey is conducted by the Okanagan Nation Alliance in conjunction with DFO.

13.5.8.5.3 Commercial Fisheries

Okanagan First Nations Commercial Sockeye Harvest

Okanagan Sockeye First Nations Demonstration Fishery

The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) will be working towards sustaining commercial sales of Okanagan Sockeye in addition to working with strategic allies for increasing sales and trade from other inland commercial fisheries. If abundance permits, a 2026 fishery would be similar to previous years where abundance was sufficient. The fishery will continue to build on previous year's demonstration fisheries and address the challenges involved in informing business plans for in-river fisheries in the BC Interior where commercial fisheries are developing, and establishing markets for inland commercial Sockeye.

Region: BC Interior

Participants: Okanagan Nation Alliance partnership: Okanagan Indian Band, West bank First Nations, Penticton Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band, Upper Nicola Indian Band Lower and Upper Similkameen Indian bands.

Location of Fishery: Osoyoos Lake and Okanagan River

Gear Type: Purse seine(s), troll fleet and tangle net

Time Frame:

NOTE: All fishery time frames are estimates and final dates will be determined according to in-season migration timing information. Fishery will target Okanagan (Columbia) Sockeye. Potential start date of July 20 with end date determined on run timing and fish quality.

Allocation: If abundance permits an opportunity, it will be identified based on in-season information of passage through Wells Dam on the Columbia River. Commercial and recreational harvesting will only be conducted if the Wells Dam counts indicate spawning escapement and FSC requirements could be met. The allowable catch will be determined in-season based on Sockeye counts over Wells Dam and movement of fish into Osoyoos Lake.

Monitoring Plan: These fisheries will be monitored using designated landing sites and validation of catch at either landing site or plant. In addition, biotelemetry tracking of adult Sockeye will continue to be developed for estimating instantaneous mortality rates (natural or fishing) during spawner migration.

13.5.8.5.4 ESSR Fisheries

There are no ESSR fisheries for Okanagan Sockeye.

APPENDIX I: LOGBOOK SAMPLES

APPENDIX I: LOGBOOK SAMPLES

SALMON TROLL Logbook I.D. # T63001 **SAMPLE** Report Catch to: 1-(888) 387-0007 Record all catch in pieces Page #

Vessel Name: Shirley May					VRN (CFV#): 12346										Unclassified - Non-Classifié	
Date	Mgmt. Area	Zone or Subarea	Hours Fished	Catch: Frozen or Iced?	¹ Kept or Released	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	² Legal Sized Chinook	² Sublegal Sized Chinook	³ Grilse	Atlantic	⁴ Rockfish	⁵ Other Species	
Day	Mon.															
8	Aug	101	4	14	(F) or I	Kept		65	330	4		X	X			
Trip ID #: FOS-12345					Rel.					2	9			4 Yellowtail, 3 Canary	1 L, 2 H	
Comments: Lots of seals around													°DCR Conf. #: FOS-12346			
Vessel Master Name: Dan Doe					Signature: Dan Doe					°F.I.N.: 99999						
9	Aug	101	4	12	(F) or I	Kept		84	350	6		X	X			
Trip ID #: FOS-12345					Rel.						7				1 S	
Comments: Released 2 Salmon Sharks													°DCR Conf. #: FOS-12347			
Vessel Master Name: Dan Doe					Signature: Dan Doe					°F.I.N.: 99999						
10	Aug	101	4	13	(F) or I	Kept		72	200			X	X			
Trip ID #: FOS-12345					Rel.					4	8			2 Chilipepper, 6 unknown rockfish	3 H	
Comments:													°DCR Conf. #: FOS-12348			
Vessel Master Name: Dan Doe					Signature: Dan Doe					°F.I.N.: 99999						
16	Aug	142	2	14	(F) or I	Kept		99	120		165	X	X	3 Black RF	4 L	
Trip ID #: FOS-12398					Rel.				30		7				10 D, 2 H	
Comments: Saw a sea turtle. Suspect it was Leatherback													°DCR Conf. #: FOS-12402			
Vessel Master Name: John Smith					Signature: John Smith					°F.I.N.: 77777						
17	Aug	142	2	14	(F) or I	Kept		57			155	X	X	8 Yellowtail RF	2 L	
Trip ID #: FOS-12398					Rel.	1		70	30		11				2 D	
Comments: Killer Whales													°DCR Conf. #: FOS-12403			
Vessel Master Name: John Smith					Signature: John Smith					°F.I.N.: 77777						

1. Catch: **Kept** are species retained on board; **Released** are species returned to the ocean. 2. As defined in the applicable Fishery Notice. 3. **Grilse** are juvenile salmon under 30 cm. 4. Rockfish are to be identified by species; if unsure of species, record as Unknown Rockfish. 5. **Other Species**: L=Lingcod, H=Halibut, D=Dogfish, M=Mackerel, S=Steelhead. Please specify **White** or **Green Sturgeon** in Comments Section. If any **birds, marine mammals, or turtles** were encountered, give time of capture and full name of species in comments. 6. **DCR Conf. #** is the confirmation number received upon completion of the Daily Catch Report. 7. Vessel master's **Fisher Identification Number**.

2026

SALMON GILLNET Logbook I.D. # G60001

Report Catch to: 1-(888) 387-0007

Record all catch in pieces

Page # 11111

Vessel Name:		Shirley May										VRN (CFV#):		12346		Unclassified - Non-Classifié							
Net Details		Type ¹ :	A	# Strands ² :	6	Length:	200 (fathoms)	Weedline Depth ³ :	30cm	Hang Ratio:	3:1	Mesh Size ³ :	4 7/8"	# Meshes:	90								
Daily Catch Records																							
Date	Mgmt. Area	Sub-area(s)	Hours Fished	# of sets	⁴ Kept or Released	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Chinook	Steel-head	Atlantic	Dogfish	⁵ Sturgeon	⁶ Other Fish	⁷ Non-fish							
Day	Mon.																						
4	Aug	12	12-4	5.5	5	Kept	4		23	127						Yes							
Trip ID #:					FOS-12480	Rel.		9								No							
Comments:															2 birds killed in 10AM set, kept for research program. Rhinoceros Auklets.		⁸ DCR Conf. #:		FOS-12346				
Vessel Master Name:					Dan Doe					Signature:					Dan Doe					⁹ F.I.N.:		99999	
5	Aug	12	12-5	7	3	Kept	73		245	4		1				Yes							
Trip ID #:					FOS-12480	Rel.		2				2				2M, 1 salmon shark	No						
Comments:															Offloaded at CANFISCO in Port Hardy on August 15 at 14:00.		⁸ DCR Conf. #:		FOS-12367				
Vessel Master Name:					Dan Doe					Signature:					Dan Doe					⁹ F.I.N.:		99999	
6	Aug	12	12-4	6	3	Kept	88		116	7			2			Yes							
Trip ID #:					FOS-12480	Rel.					1					11 M, 2 R	No						
Comments:															Steelhead released in good condition. 2 sea lions released alive around 11AM.		⁸ DCR Conf. #:		FOS-12382				
Vessel Master Name:					Dan Doe					Signature:					Dan Doe					⁹ F.I.N.:		99999	
29	Aug	17	17-11	6	6	Kept	163		328							Yes							
Trip ID #:					FOS-12773	Rel.					3	1					No						
Comments:															Fished two management areas today		⁸ DCR Conf. #:		FOS-12521				
Vessel Master Name:					John Smith					Signature:					John Smith					⁹ F.I.N.:		TTTTT	
29	Aug	29	29-2	4	6	Kept	205		493							Yes							
Trip ID #:					FOS-12773	Rel.		2			1	1					No						
Comments:															Both coho put in rev. tank, one died, one released in good condition		⁸ DCR Conf. #:		FOS-12523				
Vessel Master Name:					John Smith					Signature:					John Smith					⁹ F.I.N.:		TTTTT	

1. **Net Types:** enter 'A' for Alaska Twist, 'M' for Multi Strand or 'C' for Combination. 2. Enter number of strands if net is 'Alaska Twist' type mesh. 3. Give measurement units (in or " = inches, cm = centimeters, mm = millimeters). 4. **Kept** are species retained on board; **Released** are species returned to the ocean. 5. Please specify White or Green Sturgeon in **Comments** Section. 6. **Other Fish:** M= Mackerel, L=Lingcod, H= Halibut. Give full name for other species. 7. Circle Yes or No as appropriate if any **birds, marine mammals, or turtles** were encountered. Give time of capture and species details in comments. 8. **DCR Conf. #** is the confirmation number received upon completion of the Daily Catch Report. 9. **F.I.N.** Is the Fisher Identification Number.

SALMON SEINE		Logbook I.D. # S62001		Report Catch to: 1-(888) 387-0007		Record all catch in pieces		Page # 11111							
Vessel Name:		Shirley May				VRN (CFV#):		12346		Unclassified - Non-Classifié					
Daily Catch Records															
Date	Mgmt. Area	Sub-area(s)	Hours Fished	# of sets	¹ Kept or Released	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Adult Chinook	² Jack Chinook	Steelhead	Atlantic	³ Other Fish	⁴ Non-fish
14 Aug	3	3-3, 3-2	8	5	Kept	42		431					6		☒ Yes
Trip ID #: FOS-12281					Rel.		3		12	2					No
Comments: 2 Rhinoceros Auklets released alive at 10 AM, 1 coho clipped, 2 coho dead, 1 rel'd alive										DCR Conf. #: ⁵ FOS-12346					
Vessel Master Name: Dan Doe					Signature: Dan Doe					⁷ F.I.N.: 99999					
15 Aug	4	5	5.5	2	Kept	38		850							☒ Yes
Trip ID #: FOS-12281					Rel.				2	1		1		4 D, 1 L, 1 salmon shark	No
Comments: 1 harbour seal released, steelhead revived in tank, then released in good condition										DCR Conf. #: ⁶ FOS-12358					
Vessel Master Name: Dan Doe					Signature: Dan Doe					⁷ F.I.N.: 99999					
19 Aug	4	5	9	4	Kept	53		560							Yes
Trip ID #: FOS-12403					Rel.		2		17	4	12				No
Comments: Both coho rel'd in good condition. 12 jack chinook squishers all dead.										DCR Conf. #: ⁶ FOS-12428					
Vessel Master Name: John Smith					Signature: John Smith					⁷ F.I.N.: 77777					
Offload Catch Records						Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Chinook	(Other)				
Dates Fished		# Days Fished	Date Offloaded		☐ Pieces	☐ Pcs	☐ Pieces	☐ Pieces	☐ Pieces	☐ Pieces	☐ Pcs	Complete if catch pooled with that of another vessel:			
First date	Last date		☒ Lbs	☐ Lbs	☒ Lbs	☐ Lbs	☐ Lbs	☒ Lbs	☐ Lbs						
Day	Month		Day	Month	☐ Kgs	☐ Kgs	☐ Kgs	☐ Kgs	☐ Kgs	☐ Kgs	☐ Kgs	Received from:	Offloaded to:	Vessel	
14 Aug	15 Aug	2	15 Aug	471			3958				42	☐	☐	Name:	
Business and port offloaded to: Canfisco, Pr. Rupert					Fish slip #: 79768		OCR Conf. #: ⁶ FOS-12380				VRN (CFV#):				
19 Aug	19 Aug	1	20 Aug	310			1692					☐	☒	Name: Wind Viper	
Business and port offloaded to:					Fish slip #: 79801		OCR Conf. #: ⁶ FOS-12482				VRN (CFV#): 12347				

1. Catch: Kept are species retained on board; Released are species returned to the ocean. 2. **Jack Chinook** are all chinook smaller than 67 cm fork length (approx 26 inches). 3. **Other Fish:** M= Mackerel, L= Lingcod, H= Halibut, D= Dogfish. Please specify **White or Green Sturgeon** in Comments Section. Give full name for other species. 4. Circle Yes or No as appropriate if any **birds, marine mammals, or turtles** were encountered. Give time of capture and full name of species in comments. 5. **DCR Conf. #** is the confirmation number received upon completion of the Daily Catch Report. 6. **OCR Conf. #** is the Offload Catch confirmation number. 7. Enter the vessel master's Fisher Identification Number:

APPENDIX 2: FISHING VESSEL SAFETY

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I. OVERVIEW – FISHING VESSEL SAFETY

Vessel owners and masters have a duty to ensure the safety of their crew and vessel.

Adherence to safety regulations and good practices by owners, masters and crew of fishing vessels will help save lives, prevent vessel damage and protect the environment. All fishing vessels must be in a seaworthy condition and maintained as required by Transport Canada (TC), WorkSafeBC, and other applicable agencies. Vessels subject to inspection should ensure that the certificate of inspection is valid for the area of intended operation.

In the federal government, responsibility for shipping, navigation, and vessel safety regulations and inspections lies with TC; emergency response with the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) and DFO has responsibility for management of the fisheries resources. The Transportation Safety Board is an independent agency that advances transportation safety by investigating selected occurrences in the air, marine, pipeline and rail modes of transportation including fishing vessel occurrences. In BC, WorkSafeBC exercises jurisdiction over workplace health and safety and conducts inspections on commercial fishing vessels in order to ascertain compliance with the Workers Compensation Act (WCA) and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR).

Before departing on a voyage the authorized representative (normally the owner), must ensure that the fishing vessel is capable of and safe for the intended voyage and fishing operations. Critical factors for a safe voyage include the seaworthiness of the vessel, having the required personal protective and life-saving equipment in good working order, adequate number of properly trained crew, and knowledge of current and forecasted weather conditions. As safety requirements and guidelines may change, the vessel's authorized representative, crew, and other workers must be aware of the latest legislation, policies and guidelines prior to each trip.

There are many useful tools available for ensuring a safe voyage. These include:

- Education and training programs
- Marine emergency duties training
- Fish Safe – Stability Education Program & 1 Day Stability Workshop
- Fish Safe – SVOP (Subsidized rate for BC commercial fishers provided)
- Fish Safe – *Safest Catch* program – **FREE** for BC commercial fishers
- Fish Safe *Safe At Sea* DVD Series – Fish Safe
- Fish Safe Stability Handbook – *Safe at Sea* and *Safest Catch* – DVD Series
- Fish Safe *Safest Catch* Log Book
- Fish Safe Safety Quiz
- First Aid training
- Radio Operators Course (Subsidized rate for BC commercial fishers provided)
- Fishing Masters Certificate training

Publications:

- Gearing Up for Safety - WorkSafeBC
- <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/tp-15393e-adequate-stability-safety-guidelines-fishing-vessels> TP 15393E - Adequate stability and safety guidelines for fishing vessels
- TP 15392E - Guidelines for fishing vessel major modification or a change in activity. <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/tp-15392e-guidelines-fishing-vessel-major-modification-change-activity>
- Transport Canada Publication TP 10038 Small Fishing Vessel Safety Manual (can be obtained at Transport Canada Offices from their website at: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/tp-tp10038-menu-548.htm>)
- Amendments to the Small Fishing Vessel Inspection Regulations (can be obtained from: <http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/2016/2016-07-13/html/sor-dors163-eng.php>)
- Safety Issues Investigation into Fishing Safety in Canada report can be accessed: <https://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/rapports-reports/marine/etudes-studies/M09Z0001/M09Z0001.html>

For further information see: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation>
www.fishsafebc.com
www.worksafebc.com
www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/rapports-reports/marine/index.html

2. IMPORTANT PRIORITIES FOR VESSEL SAFETY

There are three areas of fishing vessel safety that should be considered a priority. These are: vessel stability, emergency preparedness, and cold water immersion.

2.1 FISHING VESSEL STABILITY

Vessel stability is paramount for safety. Care must be given to the stowage and securing of all cargo, skiffs, equipment, fuel containers and supplies, and to correct ballasting. Fish harvesters must be familiar with their vessel's centre of gravity, the effect of liquid free surfaces on stability (e.g. loose water or fish on deck), loading and unloading operations, watertight integrity and the vessel's freeboard. Know the limitations of your vessel; if you are unsure contact a naval architect, marine surveyor or the local Transport Canada Marine Safety Office.

Fishing vessel authorized representatives/owners are required to develop detailed instructions addressing the limits of stability for each of their vessels. These instructions must include detailed safe operation documentation kept on board the vessel.

In 2017, Transport Canada Marine Safety (TC) issued Ship Safety Bulletin (SSB) [No. 03/2017](#) announcing the coming into force of the New Fishing Vessel Safety Regulations. The initial regulations were published in the Canada Gazette Part II on July 13, 2016 and came into force on July 13, 2017. The bulletin includes important information on changes to requirements for Written Safety Procedures, Safety Equipment and Vessel Stability.

As of July 13, 2017, new regulations pertaining to stability assessments to be performed by a competent person came into effect, as follows:

A new fishing vessel that has a hull length of more than 9 m where the vessel construction was started or that a contract was signed for the construction after July 13, 2018;

A fishing vessel more than 9 m and that has undergone a major modification or a change in activity that is likely to adversely affect its stability;

A fishing vessel that is fitted with an anti-roll tank at any time;

A fishing vessel more than 15 gross tonnage and used for catching herring or capelin during the period beginning on July 6, 1977 and ending on July 13, 2017

For an existing fishing vessel that is not required to undergo a stability assessment, the owner shall be capable of demonstrating that their vessel has adequate stability to safely carry out the vessel's intended operations. Guidelines have been developed and are available online to help small fishing vessel owners and operators meet their regulatory requirements

Two good resources can be found here: [TP 15393 - Adequate stability and safety guidelines for fishing vessels \(2018\)](#) and [TP 15392 – Guidelines for fishing vessel major modification or a change in activity \(2018\)](#)

Further, the new Regulation requires a "Stability Notice" to be developed after a stability assessment. This notice includes a simple diagrammatic of the vessel, its tanks and fish holds, or deck storage as the case may be. It is intended to assist fishing vessel crews in quickly determining the safe carriage limits of the vessel without having to reference a complicated Trim and Stability Book.

Additionally, Transport Canada published a Stability Questionnaire ([SSB No. 04/2006](#)) and Fishing Vessel Modifications Form ([SSB No. 01/2008](#)) which enable operators to identify the criteria which will trigger a stability assessment. Please contact the nearest Transport Canada office if you need to determine whether your vessel requires a stability assessment, or to receive guidance on obtaining competent assessor.

In 2019, TC provided an updated [SSB 03/2019](#), which sets out a voluntary record of modifications for the benefit of owners/masters of any fishing vessels. For vessels of more than 15 gross tons, the record of modifications was to be reviewed by TC inspectors during regular

inspections and entered on the vessel's inspection record. However, information gathered during the Transportation Safety Board's (TSB) Safety Issues Investigation into the fishing industry showed minimal recording of vessel modifications prior to this date.

The TSB has investigated several fishing vessel accidents since 2008 and found a variety of factors that effected the vessel's stability were identified as contributing factors in vessels capsizing, such as with: [M08W0189](#) - *Love and Anarchy*, [M09L0074](#) - *Le Marsouin I*, [M10M0014](#) - *Craig and Justin*, [M12W0054](#) - *Jessie G*, [M12W0062](#) - *Pacific Siren*, [M14P0121](#) - *Five Star*, [M15P0286](#) - *Caledonian*, [M16A0140](#) - *C19496NB*, [M17C0061](#) - *Emma Joan*, [M17P0052](#) - *Miss Cory*, [M18P0073](#) - *Western Commander*, [M18A0425](#) - *Charlene A*, [M18A0454](#) - *Atlantic Sapphire*, [M20P0229](#) - *Arctic Fox II*, [M20A0434](#) - *Chief William Saulis*, [M20A0160](#) - *Sarah Anne*, [M21A0315](#) - *Island Lady* and [M21A0065](#) - *Tyhawk*.

Vessel masters are advised to carefully consider stability when transporting gear. Care must be given to the stowage and securing of all traps, cargo, skiffs, equipment, fuel containers and supplies and also to correct ballasting. Know the limitations of your vessel; if you are unsure contact a reputable marine surveyor, naval architect or the local Transport Canada Marine Safety office.

WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (OHSR) require owners of fishing vessels to provide documentation on board, readily accessible to crew members, which describes vessel characteristics, including stability.

Fish Safe has developed a code of best practices for the food and bait/roe herring fisheries, dive fisheries and the prawn fishery: These Best Practices are available on Fish Safe's website for convenient download here: <https://www.fishsafebc.com/best-practices>. Please contact John Krgovich at Fish Safe for a copy of the program materials they developed to address safety and vessel stability in these fisheries. John Krgovich – office: (604) 261-9700 - Email: john@fishsafebc.com.

2.2 EMERGENCY DRILL REQUIREMENTS

The Canada Shipping Act, 2001 requires that the Authorized Representative of a Canadian Vessel shall develop procedures for the safe operation of the vessel and for dealing with emergencies. The Act also requires that crew and passengers receive safety training. The Marine Personnel Regulations require that all personnel on board required to meet the minimum safe manning levels have received MED (Marine Emergency Duties) training to an A1 or A3 level, depending on the vessel's voyage limits, within 6 months of serving aboard. MED A3 training is 8 hours in duration and is applicable to seafarers on fishing vessels less than 150 GRT that are within 25 miles from shore (NC2). MED A1 training is 19.5 hours duration and is applicable to all other fishing vessels.

To assist fishers in meeting their crew training requirements, Fish Safe has created a downloadable 'New Crew Orientation Form and How To Guide' available on Fish Safe's website here: <https://www.fishsafebc.com/downloadable-tools>

MED provides a basic understanding of the hazards associated with the marine environment; the prevention of shipboard incidents; raising and reacting to alarms; fire and abandonment situations; and the skills necessary for survival and rescue.

WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) requires written rescue and evacuation procedures for work on or over water. Additionally, fishing vessel masters must establish procedures and assign responsibilities to each crew member to cover all emergencies, including the following: crew member overboard, fire on board, flooding of the vessel, abandoning ship, and calling for help. Fishing vessel masters are also required to conduct emergency drills at the start of each fishing season, when there is a change of crew, and at periodic intervals to ensure that crewmembers are familiar with emergency procedures.

Between 2015 and 2021, 15 fishing vessel accidents were reported to the TSB which resulted in 34 fatalities. In all 15 occurrences, distress alerting devices (EPIRBs, PLBs) were not used. The report's findings highlighted the lack of safety drills and safety procedures and practices. The Safest Catch program, delivered by Fish Safe and free to BC commercial fishers, includes comprehensive practice of drills such as abandon ship, man overboard and firefighting drills.

2.3 COLD WATER IMMERSION

Drowning is the number one cause of death in BC's fishing industry. Cold water is defined as water below 25 degrees Celsius, but the greatest effects occur below 15 degrees C. BC waters are usually below 15 degrees C. Normal body temperature is around 37 degrees Celsius; cold water rapidly draws heat away from the body. The effects of cold water on the body occur in four stages: cold shock, swimming failure, hypothermia and post-rescue collapse. Know what to do to prevent you or your crew from falling into the water and what to do if that occurs. More information is available in the WorkSafeBC Bulletin Cold Water Immersion (available from the WorkSafeBC website at www.worksafebc.com).

Under the recently amended (June 2019) OHS Regulation, section 24.96.1, a crewmember must wear a PFD or lifejacket when on board a fishing vessel that has no deck or deck structure or when on the deck of a fishing vessel that has a deck or deck structure. The use of a PFD will prepare a crewmember to remain afloat, to survive the effects of cold shock, reduce the need to swim and give rescuers time to respond.

Section 8.26, which requires workers to wear a PFD or lifejacket when working "under conditions which involve a risk of drowning", would continue to apply to fishing crewmembers and other workers (e.g. when they are working on shore, docks and other vessels). The specific

requirements can be found on WorkSafeBC's PFD Primer provided on Fish Safe's website here: <https://www.fishsafebc.com/cold-water-survival>.

It has been demonstrated time and again that, when worn, PFD's save lives - and the chance of surviving a mishap increases significantly when these devices are worn while working on deck.

Resulting from the TSB investigations into the *Diane Louise* - – [M14P0110](#), *Caledonian* – [M15P0286](#) and the *C19496NB* - [M16A0140](#) fishing vessel accidents the Board recommended that both TC, WorkSafeBC and WorkSafeNB require that persons wear a suitable personal flotation devices (PFDs) at all times when: on the deck of a commercial fishing vessel; or, when on board a commercial fishing vessel without a deck or deck structure, and ensure that programs are developed to confirm compliance. Between 2015 and 2021, 15 occurrences were reported to the TSB, resulting in the loss of life of 34 fish harvesters. In 11 of the 15 occurrences, personal flotation devices (PFDs) were not used.

2.4 OTHER ISSUES

2.4.1 WEATHER

Vessel owners and masters are reminded of the importance of paying close attention to current weather trends and forecasts during the voyage. Marine weather information and forecasts can be obtained on VHF channels 21B, Wx1, Wx2, Wx3, or Wx4. Weather information is also available from Environment Canada website at:

https://weather.gc.ca/marine/region_e.html?mapID=02

2.4.2 EMERGENCY RADIO PROCEDURES, EPIRB'S AND AIS

Vessel owners and masters should ensure that all crew are able to activate the Search and Rescue (SAR) system early rather than later by contacting the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG). All fishing vessels greater than 20m in length must carry a Class A AIS, as well as a float free 406 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB). These beacons must be registered with the Canadian Beacon Registry. When activated, an EPIRB transmits a distress call that is picked up or relayed by satellites and transmitted via land earth stations to the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre (JRCC), which will task and co-ordinate rescue resources. The TSB notes in the *Island Lady* – [M21A0315](#) that there have been 15 similar occurrences reported to the TSB, resulting in the loss of life of 34 fish harvesters. In all 15 occurrences, distress alerting devices (e.g., emergency position-indicating radio beacons [EPIRBs] and personal locator beacons [PLBs] were not used. ([M15A0189](#), [M16A0140](#), [M16A0327](#), [M18A0076](#), [M18A0303](#), [M18A0078](#), [M18P0184](#), [M18P0394](#), [M19A0082](#), [M19A0090](#), [M19P0242](#), [M20A0258](#), [M20A0160](#), [M21A0412](#), and [M21A0161](#)). The carriage of both AIS, PLB and EPIRB is strongly encouraged for all fishing vessels who do not fall under the mandatory threshold. PLBs require manual activation, so fish

harvesters are encouraged to carry them while working on deck. You may not have time to go locate your PLB in an emergency.

Fish harvesters should monitor VHF channel 16 or MF 2182 KHz and make themselves and their crews familiar with other radio frequencies. All crew should know how to make a distress call and should obtain their restricted operator certificate from Industry Canada. However, whenever possible, masters should contact the nearest Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Marine Communications and Traffic Services (MCTS) station (on VHF channel 16 or MF 2182 kHz) prior to a distress situation developing. Correct radio procedures are important for communications in an emergency. Incorrect or misunderstood communications may hinder a rescue response. Further information is available at [Radio Aids to Marine Navigation General](#)

Since August 1, 2003 all commercial vessels greater than 8 metres in length are required to carry a Class D VHF Digital Selective Calling (DSC) radio. A registered DSC VHF radio has the capability to alert other DSC equipped vessels in your immediate area and MCTS that your vessel is in distress. Masters should be aware that they should register their DSC radios with Industry Canada to obtain a Marine Mobile Services Identity (MMSI) number or the automatic distress calling feature of the radio may not work. For further information see the Coast Guard website at: <https://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/index-eng.html> or go directly to the Industry Canada web page: www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/eng/sf01032.html

A DSC radio that is connected to a GPS unit will also automatically include your vessel's current position in the distress message. More detailed information on DSC can be found here: [TC DSC Safety Bulletin](#). Questions regarding Coast Guard DSC capabilities can be obtained by contacting your local MCTS centre (Prince Rupert MCTS (250)627-3070 or Victoria MCTS (250)363-6333).

2.4.3 COLLISION REGULATIONS

Fish harvesters must be knowledgeable of the Collision Regulations and the responsibilities between vessels where risk of collision exists. Navigation lights must be kept in good working order and must be displayed from sunset to sunrise and during all times of restricted visibility. To help reduce the potential for collision or close quarters situations which may also result in the loss of fishing gear, fish harvesters are encouraged to monitor the appropriate local Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) VHF channel when travelling or fishing near shipping lanes or other areas frequented by large commercial vessels. Vessels required to participate in VTS include:

- a) every ship twenty metres or more in length,
- b) every ship engaged in towing or pushing any vessel or object, other than fishing gear,
- c) where the combined length of the ship and any vessel or object towed or pushed by the ship is forty five metres or more in length; or

- d) where the length of the vessel or object being towed or pushed by the ship is twenty metres or more in length.

Exceptions include:

- a) a ship towing or pushing inside a log booming ground,
- b) a pleasure yacht *less than* 30 metres in length, and
- c) a fishing vessel that is *less than* 24 metres in length and not *more than* 150 tons gross.

More detailed information on VTS can be obtained by calling either Prince Rupert MCTS (250)627-3070 or Victoria MCTS (250)363-6333 or from the Coast Guard website:

<https://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/publications/mcts-sctm/ramn-arnm/part3-eng.html>

2.4.4 BUDDY SYSTEM

Fish harvesters are encouraged to use the buddy system when transiting and fishing as this allows for the ability to provide mutual aid. An important trip consideration is the use of a sail/voyage plan which includes the particulars of the vessel, crew and voyage. The sail plan should be left with a responsible person on shore or filed with the local MCTS. After leaving port the fish harvester should contact the holder of the sail plan daily or as per another schedule. The sail plan should ensure notification to JRCC when communication is not maintained which might indicate your vessel is in distress. Be sure to cancel the sail plan upon completion of the voyage.

3. WORKSAFEBC

WorkSafeBC exercises jurisdiction over workplace health and safety, including the activities of crews of fishing vessels. Commercial fishing, diving and other marine operations are subject to the provisions of the *Workers Compensation Act (WCA)* and requirements in Part 24 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR)*. Examples of Part 24 regulatory requirements related to fishing include, but are not limited to, the requirement to establish emergency procedures, to conduct emergency drills, to provide immersion suits for the crew, to provide stability documentation for the vessel, safe work procedures, injury reporting, correction of unsafe working conditions, the requirement to wear personal floatation devices (PFDs), etc.

Other sections of the OHSR also apply to commercial fishing operations. For example, Part 3 addresses training of young and new workers, first aid, and employer incident/accident investigations. Part 4 addresses general conditions such as maintenance of equipment, workplace conduct and impairment. Part 8 addresses issues related to safety headgear, safety footwear, eye and face protection, limb and body protection and personal flotation devices

(PFDs) when working on the dock. Part 12 addresses issues related to tools, machinery and equipment, including safeguarding. Part 15 addresses issues related to rigging.

Both owners and masters of fishing vessels are considered to be employers. Under the *Workers Compensation Act* and the OHS Regulation (OHSR) they have varying and overlapping duties and responsibilities. Masters, because they have the most control during fishing and related activities, are considered to be the employer with primary responsibility for the health and safety of the crew.

The OHSR and the WCA are available from the Provincial Crown Printers or by visiting the WorkSafeBC website: www.worksafebc.com

NOTE: Regarding the OHSR requirement to wear PFD's, WorkSafeBC has produced a video entitled "Turning the Tide – PFD's in the Fishing Industry". For more information on PFD use, including a link to the video, please access the following site:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/news-events/news-releases/2018/November/new-fishing-industry-safety-video?origin=s&returnurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.worksafebc.com%2Fen%2Fsearch%23q%3DTurning%2520the%2520Tide%26sort%3Drelevancy%26f%3Alanguage-facet%3D%5BEnglish%5D>

For further information, contact an Occupational Safety Officer:

Bruce Logan	Field Services	Vancouver/ Richmond/Delta	(604) 244-6477
Cody King	Field Services	Courtenay	(250) 334-8733
Paul Matthews	Field Services	Courtenay	(250) 334-8741
Wayne Tracey	Field Services	Central	(604) 232-1939

or the Manager of Interest for Marine and Fishing, Pat Olsen (250) 334-8777

For information on projects and initiatives related to commercial fishing health and safety please contact Tom Pawlowski, Manager, OHS Consultation and Education Services, at (604) 233-4062 or by email: tom.pawlowski@worksafebc.com or Helen Chandler, OHS Consultant at (604) 276-3174 or by email: helen.chandler@worksafebc.com.

4. FISH SAFE BC

Fish Safe encourages Vessel masters and crew to take ownership of fishing vessel safety. Through this industry driven and funded program Fish Safe provides fishing relevant tools and programs to assist fishers in this goal. The Fish Safe Stability Education Program and 1 Day

Stability Workshop are available to all fishers who want to improve their understanding of stability and find practical application to their vessel's operation. The SVOP (Small Vessel Operator Proficiency) Course is designed to equip crew with the skills they need to safely navigate during their wheel watch. The Safest Catch Program, along with fisher-trained Safety Advisors, is designed to give fishers the tools they need to create a vessel specific safety management system.

As referenced throughout the above documentation, Fish Safe provides a broad range of courses, programs and services that are either free for BC commercial fishers or highly subsidized.

Fish Safe is managed by John Krgovich, Program Manager and support staff including John Krgovich, Program Coordinator, Stephanie Nguyen, Program Assistant, Rhoda Huey, Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant, and an experienced team of fisher Safety Advisors. All activities and program development is directed by the Fish Safe Advisory Committee (membership is open to all interested in improving safety on board fishing vessels). The Advisory Committee meets two to three times annually to discuss safety issues and give direction to Fish Safe in the development of education and tools for fish harvesters.

Fish Safe also works closely with WorkSafeBC to improve the fishing injury claims process. For further information contact:

John Krgovich

Program Coordinator

Cell: (604) 729-8407

Fish Safe

Office: (604) 261-9700

#100, 12051 Horseshoe Way

Email: john@fishsafebc.com

Richmond, BC V7A 4V4

www.fishsafebc.com

5. TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

The Transportation Safety Board (TSB) is not a regulatory board. The TSB is an independent agency that investigates marine, pipeline, rail and aviation transportation occurrences to determine the underlying risks and contributing factors. Its sole aim is the advancement of transportation safety by reporting publicly through Accident Investigation Reports or Marine Safety Information Letters or Advisors. It is not the function of the Board to assign fault or determine civil or criminal liability.

In 2014 the TSB pacific region released three investigation reports:

- the collision between trawl fishing vessel [Viking Storm](#) and US long line fishing vessel *Maverick* and the subsequent fatality,
- the person over board off the prawn fishing vessel [Diane Louise](#) and the subsequent fatality, and
- the capsizing of the crab fishing vessel [Five Star](#) and subsequent fatality.

In 2016 the TSB pacific region released one investigation report:

- the capsizing of the trawl [Caledonian](#) and subsequent fatalities.

In 2018 the TSB pacific region released two investigation reports:

- the capsizing and sinking of the [Miss Cory](#) and subsequent fatality
- the sinking of the [Western Commander](#) and loss of life

In 2022 the TSB pacific region released one investigation report:

- the sinking of the [Arctic Fox II](#) and subsequent fatalities.

In 2023, the TSB pacific region released one investigation report:

- the sinking of the Tug Ingenika and barge Miller 204 and subsequent fatalities.

The TSB issued five recommendations following the *Caledonian* report. Three recommendations issued are aimed at ensuring all crews have access to adequate stability information that meets their needs. That means:

- All commercial fishing vessels should have a stability assessment appropriate for their size and operation.
- The information from that assessment must then be kept current, and it must be used to determine safe operating limits.

Moreover, these operating limits must be easily measurable, and relevant to the vessel's operation. For example, that could mean marking the sides of a vessel's hull to indicate the maximum operating waterline, or maximum permitted loads can be specified in the most relevant unit of measure—total catch weight for instance, or the safe number of traps.

Regardless, for it to be of real, practical use, the information must be presented in a format that is clearly understood and easily accessible to crew.

The other two recommendations address the most basic step that harvesters can take: wearing a personal flotation device. Here in British Columbia, roughly 70 percent of all fishing-related fatalities in the past decade came while not wearing a PFD. Yet many harvesters still do not wear them. TC regulations currently require that PFDs be worn only if harvesters identify a risk, however; you never know when you could end up in the water. So the TSB is

recommending to TC to require persons to wear suitable personal flotation devices at all times when on the deck of a commercial fishing vessel or when on board a commercial fishing vessel without a deck or deck structure and that programs are developed to confirm compliance. In June 2019, WorksafeBC amended its fishing regulation related to the use of PFDs. Under the amendments, crewmembers must wear a PFD or lifejacket when on board a fishing vessel that has no deck or deck structure, or when on the deck of a fishing vessel that has a deck or deck structure. Crewmembers are not required to wear lifejackets or PFDs below deck or when inside a deck structure where there is risk of entrapment. This amendment removes the need for a risk of drowning to be present before a PFD must be worn.

For more information about the TSB, visit the website at www.tsb.gc.ca

For information about the TSB's safety issues investigation into fishing safety, visit:

<https://youtu.be/MT2WpakRZlo>

To view information on the TSB's recent safety Watchlist, visit:

<http://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/surveillance-watchlist/marine/2020/marine-01.html>

The TSB has also produced a Safe at Sea: Activity book on fishing safety intended for the next generation of fish harvesters (ages 4-7): <https://www.tsb.gc.ca/sites/default/files/eng/medias-media/prudence-safe/safe-at-sea.pdf>

Reporting an Occurrence

<https://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/incidents-occurrence/index.html>

After a reportable occurrence happens you can fill out the reporting form or contact the TSB using the contact information below.

Transportation Safety Board of Canada

4 - 3071 No. 5 Road

Richmond, BC, V6X 2T4

Email: marinenotifications.pacific@bst-tsb.gc.ca

Phone: 604-219-2414

APPENDIX 3: ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

APPENDIX 3: ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

Meeting dates and records of consultation can be found at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/fisheries-peche/smon/ihpc-cpip/index-eng.htm>

The IHPC membership list can be found on the DFO website at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/ihpc-cpip/membs-eng.html>

APPENDIX 4: UPDATES TO THE COMMERCIAL SALMON ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this appendix is to outline progress related to updates to the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework (CSAF), including:

- Document progress on key work plan items for the season agreed to by the Salmon Coordinating Committee, Commercial Salmon Advisory Board and DFO;
- Describe principles and guidelines for sharing arrangements, building on guidelines approved in the 2015/2016 IFMP;
- Outline CSAF demonstration fishery proposals assessed through the Departments' Evaluation Framework. These may be implemented subject to a final fishing plan being approved in the area which addresses any outstanding elements highlighted and sufficient returns for commercial fishing.

2. BACKGROUND

In September 2013, as part of the Pacific Salmon Treaty Mitigation program, Fisheries and Oceans Canada started a process to obtain advice on updating the CSAF to address deficiencies raised by commercial harvesters and First Nations. The Department engaged the existing advisory processes, principally the First Nations Salmon Coordinating Committee (SCC) and the Commercial Salmon Advisory Board (CSAB), and also sought the views of other First Nations and commercial interests on possible changes to the framework. Discussions with the SCC and CSAB were completed at the end of January 2015. Updates approved are detailed in the final 2015/16 IFMP. Work to address key issues raised continue. Key items being discussed include:

Supporting local area collaboration: to improve integration and collaboration among CSAF Demonstration, commercial marine and First Nation fishers;

Providing support to local proponents and DFO area staff in reviewing and developing existing and new CSAF demonstration fishery proposals; and

Using the CSAF small group forum to explore timelines and information needs to support the review of the CSAF sharing arrangements among fleets. Any proposed changes will be included in next year's draft IFMP for feedback prior to being implemented.

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The Department's broad interests in continuing to support this process are to improve the long term sustainability of Pacific wild salmon, help commercial fishery participants achieve greater economic benefit, and create more resilient commercial salmon fisheries. The Department's role has not been to propose changes to the CSAF; rather its focus has been to consider proposed changes to ensure that these were consistent with key Departmental objectives, policies, and programs.

A summary of previous work completed related to the initiative to update the CSAF is also available through the following link:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/saf-crrs/index-eng.html>.

Principles and guidelines approved through the 2015 IFMP and expanded on in 2017 are included in Section 3 below.

3. PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR CALCULATING SALMON SHARES

Below are principles and guidelines intended to provide clarity on commercial sharing arrangements. They have been developed as part of the initiative to update the CSAF in collaboration with the CSAB and SCC.

Please note: these guidelines and principles may be reviewed and updated annually to ensure they remain relevant and clear. Proposed changes will be included in draft IFMPs for feedback prior to being approved. There are no changes proposed for the 2025 season.

For simplicity, the updates to the CSAF are organized into three categories: 1. Stabilizing commercial shares; 2. Flexibility to harvest the shares and integrated planning process; and 3. Additional elements for future discussion.

CATEGORY 1: STABILIZING COMMERCIAL SHARES

The following recommendations form the basis for the commercial allocation plan starting in 2015:

- Commercial salmon shares (specified as a % allocation of the allowable commercial harvest) will be assigned by species, fleet and fishery production area. Shares at the species, fleet and fishery production area are provided in Section 12.5 of the IFMP;
- Shares will apply for a 5 year period with a provision for a review after year 4 to determine if adjustments should be made to Area A-H sharing arrangements in subsequent years. An earlier review could be considered if circumstances warrant by majority agreement of the commercial advisory board;

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- Sockeye equivalents will no longer be used to adjust shares on an annual basis;
- Licences transferred to First Nations communities for commercial purposes, from an individual relinquished commercial licence, will be based on an equal percentage allocation of the allowable commercial harvest for all licences (e.g., $1/X$ where X = total licences per fleet) in that commercial licence area (i.e., Areas A to H). Please note that licence shares may change over time due to changes in fleet size (e.g., licence retirements, stacking) or updates to the A-H sharing arrangements outlined in the commercial salmon allocation plan based on the periodic review.
- A central, common tracking system developed to provide an open and transparent annual accounting of all commercial A to H licences/allocations and First Nation economic fishery allocations by each First Nations economic fishery.
- In addition to the 22 fishery production areas that existed pre-2015, three new areas have been added, as of 2015, to better define sharing arrangements for troll fisheries limited by the Pacific Salmon Treaty including the WCVI Aggregate Abundance Based Management (AABM) Chinook, Northern BC AABM Chinook and the AB-line Pink troll fisheries.
- Sharing arrangements in the commercial salmon allocation plan are not fixed entitlements. Although best efforts will be made to achieve fishery production area target allocations over the course of the season, no guarantees are offered that allocations will actually be achieved in any given year. The achievement of commercial allocations will depend upon the ability to fish selectively and the conservation needs of the resource. In the event that allocations are not achieved over the course of the season, no compensatory adjustments (i.e. overage/underage provisions) will be made to future allocations.
- Fishing opportunities for all commercial fisheries, including First Nations commercial fisheries, targeting the same fishery management unit should be planned to provide reasonable opportunities to harvest shares. No fishery should be allowed such that its operation puts another fleet out of the water (e.g., using a disproportionate amount of bycatch to target share or using insufficient effort such that it takes an unreasonable amount of time to achieve weekly target). Post season reviews will address whether fisheries adjustments may be required in future years to address situations where allocations are not achieved.
- In the event of extenuating circumstances (e.g., when fisheries are opened until further notice after escapement objectives are met in a terminal fishery), commercial sharing arrangements may be set aside and commercial opportunities will focus on harvesting surplus salmon. These situations will be discussed at local processes where possible to coordinate fishing plans.

APPENDIX 4: UPDATES TO THE COMMERCIAL SALMON ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK

Further Considerations on Stabilizing Commercial Shares

In addition to the three additional production areas which were approved starting in 2015, the SCC recommended adding an additional fishery production area for a total of 26. This 26th fishery production area would result by dividing the Fraser River Chum from the southern inside Chum production area. This additional production area was not approved; however, may be considered in the future pending additional discussion.

It is expected that annual post-season reviews will be conducted to consider how well the approved allocation arrangements have been implemented in commercial fisheries that season.

CATEGORY 2: FLEXIBILITY TO HARVEST SHARES AND INTEGRATED PLANNING PROCESS

Both the CSAB and the SCC are seeking greater flexibility to harvest the shares that are assigned at the fishery production area level and/or are associated with voluntarily relinquished commercial licences transferred to First Nations.

The following principles and operational guidelines form the basis for the incremental testing of flexibilities to harvest shares which started in 2016 informed through the collaborative advisory process (CSAF small group, which includes participants of from the SCC, CSAB and DFO) and a Departmental evaluation framework (these are described in more detail under “further considerations on flexibilities” below).

- Greater flexibility, such as fishing location and methods, should be provided to harvest the shares; however, ‘one size does not fit all’ and each gear type through its area harvest committee or First Nations economic fishery should determine the best approach to harvest their shares;
- First Nations that have Area A-H licences may continue to fish those licences in the current A-H fisheries or they may choose to transfer the harvest share associated with those licences to a First Nation economic fishery. Under the SCC proposal, any First Nations economic fishery would have to be managed in coordination with other fisheries and would require approval from the Department (including proposed fishing method, location and time);
- A revised collaborative process will be required to coordinate the collective interests of the A-H fisheries and First Nations economic fisheries in order to produce integrated fishing plans. This could also include more local harvest planning processes as required;
- In-season transfers of shares among and between A-H and First Nation economic fisheries will be considered. These arrangements will be subject to operational

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guidelines for pre-season and in-season transfers (see the current Guidelines and any proposals for Temporary Commercial Salmon Share Transfers, Section 0);

- Transfers between fisheries, including marine and inland areas, must account for similar stocks/species, as well as, any management adjustments that may need to be taken into consideration for transfers to inland areas;
- Bycatch and stocks of concern (i.e. non-targeted species that limit target species access) will not be formally allocated at this time. Available impacts must be shared between all commercial fisheries, including First Nation economic fisheries, in the development of operational plans to allow every fishery reasonable access to its target species. Operational plans should be discussed annually through a collaborative process among all commercial fishery participants, including First Nations economic interests. The use of bycatch will require more discussion to further clarify how bycatch is best used under different scenarios;
- There will be a requirement to have accurate, timely and accessible fisheries data, such that there is sufficient information for all Pacific salmon fisheries to be managed sustainably and to meet other reporting obligations and objectives; and
- Common standards and approach will be used for evaluating and approving flexibilities to harvest shares whether these are Area A-H or First Nations economic fisheries. Operational issues about how to operationalize harvest flexibilities in different areas has underscored the need for greater clarity and transparency in applying any of the proposed changes.
- Assessment fisheries should take into consideration existing sharing arrangements between A to H and First Nations commercial fisheries; opportunities for assessment fisheries should be proportionate with existing shares or as agreed to by the relevant parties.

Further Considerations on Flexibility to Harvest Shares:

The SCC proposal envisaged that any First Nations that have Area A-H licence(s) may continue to fish those licence(s) in A-H fisheries or choose to transfer the harvest share associated with that licence to a First Nation economic fishery. This could result in First Nation economic fisheries in marine or inland areas based on shares converted from A-H fisheries. The relevant First Nations economic fishery (including any proposed fishing methods, times and locations) would need approval from the Department. Any First Nations fishery would have to be managed in coordination with other commercial fisheries (including A-H), on the same species

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and would have to meet Department requirements for stock assessment, catch monitoring, compliance and enforcement.

Similarly, the CSAB suggested that fleets in the A-H fisheries should decide how to best harvest their shares through harvest committee deliberations and thus endorsed the view that “one size does not fit all” when it came to how fleets may choose to harvest their shares.

The Department will adopt an incremental approach to implementation of harvesting flexibilities starting in 2016, informed through a collaborative advisory process and a common evaluation framework to review proposals submitted.

Collaborative Process

An inclusive commercial advisory process including commercial representatives from the A – H fisheries and First Nations economic fisheries will be required for the Department supporting implementation of any proposed flexibilities. Since 2015, a small working group comprised of CSAB, SCC and DFO representatives has been effective at exploring opportunities for collaboration and improving understanding of various perspectives, while communicating with each host organization to ensure consistency and accuracy of feedback included. The purpose of this CSAF small working group is as a forum to discuss and make recommendations for the Department’s consideration on implementation of the revised allocation framework, the operational details associated with proposed flexibilities and how to prioritize testing of potential harvesting flexibilities including: reviewing and assessing proposals pre-season and considering the results of pilots against evaluation criteria post-season. The Department will continue to work with the existing CSAB and SCC to determine next steps, other priority items for discussion, relevant for this forum and support the use of the CSAF small group process for collaborative discussions.

Local Fishing Area Discussions:

Discussions on commercial harvest plans including which group fishes first, sequencing of opportunities, amounts of fishing time and other fishing plan parameters should be discussed among fishery participants at planning processes suitable to the scale of the fishery (e.g. local area) and included within the IFMP as required. The Department will continue to consider advice and recommendations on proposed fishing plans from the local First Nations, Area Harvest Committees, and other groups to promote integrated fishery planning.

Local management committees are encouraged to promote effective communication, consultation and support increased collaboration and integration of commercial fisheries. Structure and protocol for any local committees should promote effective management through open, transparent and collaborative process to develop and implement commercial fishing

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plans. Existing processes will be used whenever possible/practical to support pre-season planning, in-season management and post-season review. Operational plans should be guided by the principles and guidelines outlined in this document and, where possible, identify clear decision guidelines that address the potential fishery configurations and effort associated with a range of potential commercial harvest scenarios.

Pre-agreed methods for calculating in-season harvest amounts associated with commercial allocations for all groups should be identified in local area fishing plans and/or the IFMP where appropriate and communicated pre-season so all commercial participants have clarity on sharing arrangements. Methods should account for all commercial allocations including A to H fleets, FN demonstration, economic opportunities and harvest agreement fisheries.

Approaches for in-season communication (e.g., integrated conference calls, Fisheries Notices, etc.) of fishing opportunities, sharing arrangements and catch to date should be provided for discussion with First Nations and stakeholders.

Evaluation Framework

In 2016, DFO in collaboration with the SCC and CSAB developed an Evaluation Framework (E.F.) supported by all parties. The E.F. outlines the objectives and criteria that are used to assess CSAF proposals for flexible harvest arrangements for all commercial/economic fisheries. The E.F. may be reviewed and updated annually based on post-season discussions.

CATEGORY 3: ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS FOR DISCUSSION:

In addition to commercial allocation arrangements within Section 12.5 of the IFMP and those listed above in Category 2: *Flexibility to Harvest Shares*, there are a number of additional elements in the SCC and CSAB proposals where differences remain. These elements may have policy implications and require additional discussion, collaboration and analysis by commercial harvesters, First Nations and the Department.

Details are included within the original proposals received by both the SCC and CSAB in 2015 which can be reviewed at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/saf-crrs/index-eng.html>

Further considerations on additional elements:

For more information on dual fishing in the South Coast, please see Section 10.3.6 Dual Fishing. Or for more information on the North Coast dual fishing, please see the North Coast IFMP Section 10.3.4 Dual Fishing.

The following areas have been highlighted by the SCC and CSAB where there was no agreement concerning the proposed changes.

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The CSAB has indicated concerns with the guidelines for the conversion of an existing marine A-H commercial licence (not including licences held in DFO inventory) into a First Nation economic fishery allocation (guidelines the CSAB would like to be consider prior to approval of conversions include timing (e.g. pre-season vs. in-season), notification, and transfer/tracking requirements. Please see the transfer guidelines in Section 12.5.1 for more details.

In addition, there are some proposed changes that are principally matters best handled between DFO and the relevant group. These matters will require further discussion with the Department.

The SCC has proposed a separate management body/process to manage First Nations salmon shares including a proposed body (a 'First Nations' licensing board') to administer use of shares associated with relinquished commercial salmon licences from the DFO inventory or licences otherwise set aside for First Nations use. The Department has not initiated development of a separate board; however, DFO would be interested in hearing any principles for the distribution of licences which the SCC may suggest for consideration.

The CSAB had indicated interest in reviewing commercial licencing policy; however, initial discussions highlighted the diversity of views and priorities on potential areas of work within the CSAB.

4. CSAF DEMONSTRATION FISHERY PROPOSALS FOR FLEXIBLE HARVEST ARRANGEMENTS

As part of implementing changes to the CSAF, the Department adopted an incremental approach to providing increased flexibility to harvest salmon shares starting in 2016. Each proposal is assessed by the same Evaluation Framework which defines the principles and operational guidelines required by DFO to ensure appropriate implementation of proposed harvesting flexibilities. Before renewal, proposals will be evaluated against their originally outlined performance objectives to ensure they were met. The Department's Evaluation Framework was developed to assess proposals with input from the SCC and CSAB. There continues to be agreement from DFO, the SCC and CSAB to continue using the Evaluation Framework with no updates to the principles, objectives and criteria currently in use.

Below is a table outlining demonstration fishery proposals that were reviewed using the Department's Evaluation Framework. For details on proposals or fishing plans for CSAF demonstrations which were included in the final IFMP and implemented in previous years, please contact the relevant resource manager in the area or the Pacific Salmon Management Team (DFO.PacificSalmonRMT-EGRSaumondupacifique.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).

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Approved CSAF demonstration fisheries listed below will be implemented contingent on any remaining considerations being resolved with a fishing plan approved in the local area and sufficient returns for commercial harvest. The Department will be discussing operational details with First Nations and stakeholders in each demonstration fishery proposal area to develop fishing plans. Should operational considerations not be resolved, or sufficient abundance not materialize, the demonstration fishery will not occur in the coming season.

Any demonstration fishery that does proceed in 2026 will be reviewed as part of the post-season review process. Below is a table which outlines the section and related demonstration fishery project included within this appendix.

Year Approved	Salmon Coordinating Committee	Commercial Salmon Advisory Board
	Northern B.C.	Northern B.C.
2016	Central Coast hatchery Chum (Heiltsuk/Kitasoo)	Central Coast Coho (Area F)
2016	Nass River Sockeye (Nisga'a Lisims Government)	
2016	Nass River Sockeye (Gitanyow Fisheries Authority)	
2016	Skeena Sockeye (NCSFNSS)	
2016	Skeena Sockeye (Lake Babine Nation)	
2016	Skeena Sockeye (Gitksan Watershed Authorities)	
2017	Central Coast Chum (Nuxalk)	
2017	Haida Gwaii Coho (CHN)	

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2018	Skeena Pink – Area 3 / 4 (NCSFNSS)	
2018	Coho bycatch within existing Pink ESSR (Wet'suwet'en)	
2018	Central Coast Chinook (Nuxalk)	
2019	Skeena Sockeye (Metlakatla First Nation)	
2020	Central Coast Chum and Pink (Heiltsuk First Nation)	
2021	Skeena Sockeye (Lax Kw'alaams Band)	
2021	Nass Pink (Metlakatla First Nation and Lax Kw'alaams Band)	
2023	Skeena Sockeye (Lax Kw'alaams Band)	
2025	Skeena Sockeye (Kitselas First Nation)	
2025	Skeena Sockeye (Kitsumkalum First Nation)	
	Southern B.C.	Southern B.C.
2016	Cowichan Chum (Cowichan Tribes)	
2017	Goldstream Chum (W̱SÁNEĆ Nations)	Qualicum/Puntledge (Chum Area D)

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2017		Area 12 – 9 Encounter study (Area D)
2017		Mainland/Inlet Pink and Chum (Area H)
2018	Bute Inlet Chum (Homalco First Nation)	Bute Inlet Chum (Area H)
2018		Bute Inlet Chum (Area D)
2019	Terminal Chum (K'omoks First Nation)	Mainland Inlet Pink & Chum Fishery: Area 12 Broughton Archipelago (Area H)
2019	Nanaimo Terminal Chum (Snuneymuxw First Nation)	
2020		Fraser Chum ITQ (Area E)
2022		Inside Chinook Fishery (Area G)
2023	Local Marine Pink (A-Tlegay Fisheries Society)	Quinsam Pink (Area B)
2023		Quinsam Pink (Area H)
2025	Toq ^w anən Chum (Tla'amin First Nation)	
2025	Southern Inside Chum (Snyneymuxw First Nation)	

First Nations requests for access to salmon allocations associated with licences in the Departmental licence inventory will be reviewed internally by the Department and outcomes will be confirmed with First Nations proponents. Demonstration fisheries that do not receive requested allocations will not proceed.

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Full versions of the original proposals or final fishing plans are available upon request to DFO.PacificSalmonRMT-EGRSaumondupacific.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca or the local fishery manager.

To view the list of North Coast CSAF demonstration fisheries, please see the Northern BC IFMP.

4.1 NEW FOR 2026-27

Please note that any new CSAF proposals approved for 2026-27 must be approved independent of any dual fishing components.

4.1.1 UFISH FRASER NADINA SOCKEYE SALMON (ENHANCED STOCK)

	UFISH Fraser Nadina Sockeye Salmon (Enhanced Stock)
Included in Final IFMP	2026
Status (Implemented/Developing)	New for 2026
Allocation	Nadina Sockeye to be fished in excess of FRP identified CCTAC or S _{msy} .
Location	Fraser Lake and surrounding areas where Nadina sockeye may be encountered.
Size	1 shallow purse seine vessel and/or 1 beach seine crew.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Validation of landed catch, daily catch reporting, fish slips, identified landing site prior to fishery commencing which includes landing slips and harvest log completion.
Communication	Communication through FSMC forum processes, IHPC, with local First Nations, and the local SFAC pre-season.
Further Information	Dale Michie (dale.michie@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

4.1.2 AREA H JOHNSTON STRAIT TROLL CHUM SALMON

	Area H Johnston Strait Troll Chum Salmon
Included in Final IFMP	2026

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Status (Implemented/ Developing)	New for 2026
Allocation	Existing share of Southern Inside Chum as per the CSAF
Location	PFMA 13
Size	6 vessels and a total of 12 boat days off the top of the fleets allocation for the season
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	100% coverage of at-sea monitoring, including At-Sea Observers at a minimum and EM, will be required for independent verification of at-sea releases.
Communication	Detailed pre-season planning with the Area H Harvest Committee required for a successful fishery. Topics such as monitoring and compliance, TAC, and harvest guidelines will be discussed. Should this fishery be opened in 2026, fishery openings, closures and catch estimates to be provided in-season by Fishery Notice. Post-season results reviewed through IHPC and with First Nations.
Further Information	Madeline Wanless, DFO Fisheries Manager (Madeline.Wanless@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

4.2 TLA'AMIN NATION LED FISHERY ON TOQ'ANƏN CHUM SALMON WITHIN THE TREATY-DEFINED TERMINAL HARVEST AREA

	Tla'amin Nation Led Fishery on Toq'anən Chum Salmon within the Treaty-Defined Terminal Harvest Area
Included in Final IFMP	2025
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2025: Not Implemented
Allocation*	A harvest management strategy will be put in place for the remaining 75% of the Available Terminal Harvest (ATH) of toq'anən River Chum Salmon that provides fishing opportunities to all sectors.
Location	Subarea 15-4
Size	Number and type of vessels will vary based on level of abundance to be targeted. To be determined through the fishery guidelines and in-season roundtable.

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Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	100% accounting at the designated landing sites by Tla'amin Nation Guardians and/or Fisheries staff.
Communication	Oversight by the Tla'amin Joint Fisheries Committee, and a multi-sectoral roundtable for pre-season and in-season communications.
Further Information	Teagan Wardrop – DFO Fisheries Manager

*Shares change annually based the respective gear shares for the production Area and licences in DFO Inventory. Shares were based on 24 Area B, 18 Area D, 68 Area E, and 19 Area H licences in the DFO Inventory.

4.3 CONUMA CHINOOK ITQ (AREA D)

	Conuma Chinook Individual Transferable Quota
Included in Final IFMP	2025
Status (Implemented/Developing)	Area D has opted not to proceed with an ITQ for Conuma Chinook in 2025. ITQ will remain an option for future years.
Allocation	Area D allocation for the terminal Conuma Chinook return.
Location	Portions of subarea 25-4 and 25-5 (Tlupana Inlet)
Size	TBD based on transfers made in season.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	100% dockside validation is required for any ITQ fishery. A level of independent at-sea monitoring may be required.
Communication	Communications regarding fisheries planning in season will occur at the Area 25 roundtable
Further Information	Samantha Kagan – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.4 FRASER SOCKEYE ITQ (AREA E)

	Fraser Sockeye Individual Transferable Quota
Included in Final IFMP	2025

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Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2025: Implemented
Allocation	~82% of the total Area E allocation of 25.1% of the commercial Fraser Sockeye allocation.
Location	Areas 29(13), (14), (16), and (17) - Fraser main stem from Sandheads to the Mission Bridge.
Size	TBD based on transfers made in season
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	100% dockside validation is a requirement of ITQ fisheries. On-water observer coverage in each opening to conduct net haul observations and gather information on encounters. Biological sampling will be determined through pre-season discussion.
Communication	The Area E Harvest Committee will appoint a representative of the Area E licence holders to correspond and communicate with the DFO and the monitoring service provider.
Further Information	Pamela Pook – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.5 QUINSAM PINK (AREA B)

	Quinsam Pink
Included in Final IFMP	2023
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2023: Not Implemented 2024: Not Implemented 2025: Not Implemented
Allocation	73% of the south coast pink allocation (dependent on area) as per the CSAF.
Location	Areas 12/13, and Area 29 targeting local abundances
Size	Limited vessels, TAC to be determined based on test fishery population size estimates.

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Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Level of monitoring to be defined through consultation with DFO. At-sea monitoring, and/or dock side monitoring may be provided by the Service Provider or local First Nation.
Communication	Detailed pre-season planning with the Area B Harvest Committee required for a successful fishery. Topics such as monitoring and compliance, TAC, and harvest guidelines will be discussed. Should this fishery be opened in 2026, fishery openings, closures and catch estimates to be provided in-season by Fishery Notice. Post-season results reviewed through IHPC and with First Nations.
Further Information	Madeline Wanless – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.6 QUINSAM PINK (AREA H)

	Quinsam Pink
Included in Final IFMP	2023
Status (Implemented/Developing)	2023: Not Implemented 2024: Not Implemented 2025: Not Implemented
Allocation	18% of the south coast pink allocation (dependent on area) as per the CSAF.
Location	Portions of Area 13
Size	Limited vessels, TAC to be determined based on test fishery population size estimates.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Level of monitoring to be defined through consultation with DFO. At-sea monitoring, and/or dock side monitoring may be provided by the Service Provider or local First Nation.
Communication	Detailed pre-season planning with the Area H Harvest Committee required for a successful fishery. Topics such as monitoring and compliance, TAC, and harvest guidelines will be discussed. Should this fishery be opened in 2026, fishery openings, closures and catch estimates

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	to be provided in-season by Fishery Notice. Post-season results reviewed through IHPC and with First Nations.
Further Information	Madeline Wanless – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.7 A-TLEGAY FISHERIES SOCIETY QUINSAM PINK

	Quinsam Pink
Included in Final IFMP	2023
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2023: Not Implemented 2024: Not Implemented 2025: Not Implemented
Allocation	20.01% of the Mainland Pink
Location	Portions of Areas 13
Size	Limited vessels, TAC to be determined based on test fishery population size estimates.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Level of monitoring to be defined through consultation with DFO. At-sea monitoring, and/or dock side monitoring may be provided by the Service Provider or local First Nation.
Communication	Detailed pre-season planning with the A-Tlegay Fisheries Society required for a successful fishery. Topics such as monitoring and compliance, TAC, and harvest guidelines will be discussed. Should this fishery be opened in 2026, fishery openings, closures and catch estimates to be provided in-season by Fishery Notice. Post-season results reviewed through IHPC and with First Nations.
Further Information	Andrea Goruk – Aboriginal Affairs Advisor

APPENDIX 4: UPDATES TO THE COMMERCIAL SALMON ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK**4.8 AREA G INSHORE CHINOOK**

	Inside Chinook
Included in Final IFMP	2022
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	Implemented in 2023,2024, 2025 and 2026
Allocation	Existing share of AABM Chinook as part of CSAF
Location	Inshore portions of the WCVI (Areas 23-27)
Size	4,000 pieces, increases to the TAC may be considered based on the results of the 2023 to 2025 demonstration fisheries.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	DFO DNA sampling program that will be done in conjunction with existing MRP (i.e. CWT); dockside monitoring programs; Start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reporting; logbook or E-log entry for each day of fishing.
Communication	Detailed pre-season planning with the Area G Harvest Committee. Fishery openings, closures and catch estimates to be provided in-season by Fishery Notice. Post-season results reviewed through IHPC, Maa-nulth Joint Fisheries Committee (Technical Subcommittee), NTC Joint Technical Committee, and bilateral discussions with five Nations.
Further Information	Brad Beaith – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.9 AREA 14 TERMINAL CHUM (K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION)

	Terminal Chum
Included in Final IFMP	2019
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2019 to 2025: Insufficient returns 2025: Insufficient returns

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Allocation*	19.58% of Southern Inside Chum catches from Area 14.
Location	A portion of Area 14 (TBC)
Size	1- 2 seines or 3-5 gillnet vessels. Final number based on the number of fish to be harvested.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	TBC – consistent with commercial marine fisheries
Communication	A K'ómoks First Nation Fisheries demonstration fishery manager will be identified and will be responsible for the coordination of the K'ómoks fishery and will be the primary contact for all communication with DFO and fishers.
Further Information	Andrea Goruk – Aboriginal Affairs Advisor

*Shares change annually based the respective gear shares for the production Area and licences in DFO Inventory. Shares were based on 24 Area B, 18 Area D, 68 Area E, and 19 Area H licences in the DFO Inventory.

4.10 MAINLAND INLET PINK & CHUM FISHERY: AREA 12 BROUGHTON ARCHIPELAGO (AREA H)

	Mainland Inlet Pink & Chum – Area 12 Broughton Archipelago (Area H)
Included in Final IFMP	2019
Status (Implemented/Developing)	2019: Not implemented 2020: Not implemented 2021: Not implemented 2022: Not Implemented 2023: Not Implemented 2024: Not Implemented 2025: Not Implemented
Allocation	Existing share of Southern Inside Chum as per the CSAF.
Location	Sub-Areas 12 -26 to 12-30 and 12-35 to 12-42 (TBC)

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Size	5 vessels. Final number based on the number of fish to be harvested.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reporting; logbook or E-log entry for each day of fishing; monitoring program to be determined.
Communication	Communication protocols with other fisheries and participants and DFO would be coordinated with the Resource Manager. The same type of program that occurs for southern inside Chum is envisioned.
Further Information	Madeline Wanless – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.1.1 SNUNEYMUXW FIRST NATION CHUM DEMONSTRATION FISHERY

	Snuneymuxw First Nation Chum Demonstration Fishery
Included in Final IFMP	2019
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2019: Not implemented 2020: Implemented 2021: Not implemented 2022: Implemented 2023: Insufficient returns 2024: Implemented 2025: Implemented (revised)
Allocation*	19.58% of Southern Inside Chum catches from Area 17.
Location	Area 17
Size	10-20 smaller vessels in the marine area utilizing gill nets and hook and line, an assessment fishery (1 vessel) to test for early abundance in the marine area, and beach seines on the river.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	100% dock-side monitoring that is Nation-led by Resource Management Officer Technicians (RMOTs).

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Communication	A Snuneymuxw First Nation fishery manager will be identified and will be responsible for the coordination of the Snuneymuxw fishery and will be the primary contact for all communication with DFO and fishers.
Further Information	Andrea Haas – DFO Fisheries Manager

*Shares change annually based the respective gear shares for the production Area and licences in DFO Inventory. Shares were based on 24 Area B, 18 Area D, 68 Area E, and 19 Area H licences in the DFO Inventory.

4.12 COWICHAN CHUM (COWICHAN TRIBES)

	Cowichan Terminal Chum (Cowichan Tribes)
Included in Final IFMP	2016
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2016: Implemented 2017: Implemented 2018: Implemented 2019: Not Implemented 2020: Implemented 2021: Not Implemented 2022: Insufficient returns 2023: Insufficient returns 2024: Implemented 2025: Insufficient returns
Allocation*	19.58% of Southern Inside Chum catches from Area 18.
Location	A portion of PFMA 18-6, a portion of PFMA 18-7, a portion of PFMA 18-8.
Size	1- 2 seines or 3-5 gillnet vessels. Final number based on the number of fish to be harvested.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Nation-led; requirement to submit landing slips and sales slips.

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Communication	A Cowichan Tribes fishery manager will be identified and will be responsible for the coordination of the Cowichan fishery and will be the primary contact for all communication with DFO and fishers.
Further Information	Andrea Haas – DFO Fisheries Manager

*Shares change annually based the respective gear shares for the production Area and licences in DFO Inventory. Shares were based on 24 Area B, 18 Area D, 68 Area E, and 19 Area H licences in the DFO Inventory.

4.13 GOLDSTREAM CHUM (W̱SÁNEĆ NATIONS)

	Goldstream Chum (W̱sáneć Nations)
Included in Final IFMP	2016
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2017: Insufficient returns 2018: Implemented 2019: Not Implemented 2020: Not Implemented 2021: Not Implemented 2022: Not Implemented 2023: Insufficient returns 2024: Implemented 2025: Insufficient returns
Allocation*	19.58% of Southern Inside Chum catches from Area 19.
Location	Portions of PFMA 19
Size	1- 2 seines or 3-5 gillnet vessels. Final number based on the number of fish to be harvested.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Nation-led; requirement to submit landing slips and sales slips.
Communication	The respective W̱sáneć Nation leading the demonstration fishery will appoint a fishery manager to be responsible for the coordination of the

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	Goldstream fishery and will be the primary contact for all communication with DFO and fishers.
Further Information	Andrea Haas – DFO Fisheries Manager

*Shares change annually based the respective gear shares for the production Area and licences in DFO Inventory. Shares were based on 24 Area B, 18 Area D, 68 Area E, and 19 Area H licences in the DFO Inventory.

4.14 BUTE INLET CHUM (HOMALCO FIRST NATION)

	Bute Inlet Chum (Homalco First Nation)
Included in Final IFMP	2018
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2018: Insufficient returns; final fishing plan pending 2019: Not implemented 2020: Not implemented 2021: Not implemented 2022: Not Implemented 2023: Insufficient returns 2024: Insufficient returns 2025: Insufficient returns; not implemented
Allocation*	19.58% of Southern inside Chum catches from Area 13
Location	13-21
Size	3-5 gillnet vessels. Final number based on the number of fish to be harvested.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	To be determined in discussion with DFO
Communication	A Homalco First Nations representative will be identified and will be responsible for the coordination of the Bute Inlet fishery and will be the primary contact for all communication with DFO and fishers.
Further Information	Andrea Goruk – DFO Aboriginal Affairs Advisor

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*Shares change annually based the respective gear shares for the production Area and licences in DFO Inventory. Shares were based on 24 Area B, 18 Area D, 68 Area E, and 19 Area H licences in the DFO Inventory.

4.15 SOCKEYE, PINK AND CHUM ALTERNATE GEAR (AREA E)

	Fraser River Sockeye, Pink and Chum Alternate Gear (Area E)
Included in Final IFMP	2016
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2016/2017: Not implemented, insufficient interest 2018/2019: Not implemented, final fishing plan pending 2020 to 2025: Not implemented
Allocation	Existing share of Area E Fraser River Sockeye, Pink and Chum as per the CSAF.
Location	Fraser River main stem
Size	Up to 15 shallow seines to harvest Pinks, Sockeye, Chum. 1-3 beach seine for Chum. The numbers of shallow seines and the beach seines would be limited by the uncaught Area E allocation.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Dockside monitoring for the shallow seines and on grounds monitor for the beach seines; 3 landing sites; 25% roving observer coverage.
Communication	Area E would appoint a spokesperson for communication with other fisheries and DFO. It is expected that there would be at least weekly in-season communications with DFO and or a local harvest committee if one is struck.
Further Information	Pamela Pook – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.16 QUALICUM AND PUNTLEDGE CHUM (AREA D)

	Qualicum and Puntledge Chum (Area D)
Included in Final IFMP	2017

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Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2017: Implemented 2018: Insufficient returns 2019: Insufficient returns 2020: Implemented 2021: Insufficient returns 2022: Insufficient returns 2023: Insufficient returns 2024: Implemented 2025: Insufficient returns
Allocation	Existing share of Southern Inside Chum as per the CSAF
Location	Area 14
Size	10 vessels
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reporting; logbook or e-log entry for each day of fishing
Communication	Communication in-season would be via the Chum Working Group
Further Information	Teagan Wardrop – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.17 AREA 12-9 ENCOUNTER (AREA D)

	Area 12-9 Encounter Study (Area D)
Included in Final IFMP	2017
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2014: Implemented 2018: Implemented 2020 to 2025: Not implemented
Allocation*	Existing share of Sockeye as per the CSAF

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Location	Subareas 12-9, 12-10, and portion of 12-8
Size	10 to 25 vessels
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Minimum of 20% on-board observer coverage; subject to regular Area D Gill Net licence conditions; logbook or e-log entry for each day of fishing
Communication	Communication in-season would be via the Fraser harvest committee
Further Information	Teagan Wardrop – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.18 BUTE INLET CHUM (AREA D)

	Bute Inlet Chum (Area D)
Included in Final IFMP	2018
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2018: Insufficient returns; final fishing plan pending 2019: Insufficient returns 2020: Insufficient returns 2021: Insufficient returns 2022: Not implemented 2023: Insufficient returns 2024: Insufficient returns 2025: Insufficient returns
Allocation	Existing share of Southern Inside Chum as per the CSAF.
Location	Subareas 13-20 to 13-22
Size	Limited entry fleet (4-5 vessels). Final number based on the number of fish to be harvested.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reporting; logbook or E-log entry for each day of fishing

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Communication	Communication in-season would be via the Chum Working Group
Further Information	Teagan Wardrop – DFO Fisheries Manager

4.19 MAINLAND INLET PINK & CHUM – JERVIS INLET (AREA H)

	Mainland Inlet Pink & Chum – Jervis Inlet (Area H)
Included in Final IFMP	2017
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2017: Not implemented - low forecast; final fishing plan pending 2018: Not implemented - low forecast; final fishing plan pending 2019: Not implemented - low forecast; final fishing plan pending 2020: Not implemented 2021: Not implemented 2022: Not Implemented 2023: Not Implemented 2024: Not Implemented 2025: Not Implemented
Allocation	Existing share of Southern Inside Chum as per the CSAF.
Location	Areas 12 to 19 and 28
Size	2-3 vessels. Final number based on the number of fish to be harvested.
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reporting; dockside catch validation; logbook or E-log entry for each day of fishing
Communication	Communication protocols with other fisheries and participants and DFO would be coordinated with the Resource Manager. The same type of program that occurs for southern inside Chum is envisioned.
Further Information	Madeline Wanless – DFO Fisheries Manager

APPENDIX 4: UPDATES TO THE COMMERCIAL SALMON ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK**4.20 BUTE INLET CHUM (AREA H)**

	Area 13 – Bute Inlet Chum (Area H)
Included in Final IFMP	2018
Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2018: Insufficient returns; final fishing plan pending 2019: Insufficient returns; final fishing plan pending 2020: Not implemented 2021: Not implemented 2022: Not implemented 2023: Not Implemented 2024: Not Implemented 2025: Not Implemented
Allocation	Existing share of Southern Inside Chum as per the CSAF.
Location	Subareas 13-20 and 13-23
Size	4 vessels
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reporting; logbook or E-log entry for each day of fishing; monitoring program to be determined.
Communication	Communication protocols with other fisheries and participants and DFO would be coordinated with the Resource Manager. This fishery should form part of the southern inside Chum coordinated management program.
Further Information	Madeline Wanless– DFO Fisheries Manager

4.21 FRASER CHUM ITQ (AREA E)

	Fraser Chum ITQ (Area E)
Included in Final IFMP	2020

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Status (Implemented/ Developing)	2020: Implemented 2021 to 2025: Not implemented
Allocation	TBD (in-season)
Location	Fraser River
Size	Up to 100 vessels (est.)
Catch Monitoring (Key Elements)	Logbook or e-log entry for each day of fishing; dockside validation; roving at-sea observer coverage; subject to Area E Gill Net licence conditions;
Communication	Communication in-season via the Chum WG; Area E Harvest Committee (AEHC)
Additional Comments	Longer term commercial closure is in place until clear evidence of stock growth.
Further Information	Pamela Pook – DFO Resource Manager

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

2026 GUIDELINES

The following information is provided as a guide to the Area B Seine, Area E Gill Net, and Area H Troll Individual Transferable Quota Demonstration fisheries. These guidelines are intended for general purposes only. Where there is a discrepancy between the guidelines and the Conditions of Licence, the Conditions of Licence are the final authority.

1. SETTING TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH AND ASSOCIATED QUOTA SHARES:

The Area B, Area E, and Area H Fraser River Sockeye quota will be determined by DFO by dividing the respective Area B, Area E, and Area H Fraser River Sockeye allocations (percent), by the total number of licences for Area B, Area E, and Area H multiplied by the available Fraser River Sockeye Commercial Total Allowable Catch (CTAC) determined in-season.

- The quota share will remain fixed in-season subject to amendments for seasonal quota transactions and will be expressed as a percentage of the Commercial TAC.
- The Commercial TAC for Fraser Sockeye will be distributed over the course of the fishery in increments and will be cumulative over the course of the season.
- The Commercial TAC will be announced by Fishery Notice and adjusted if necessary following Fraser River Panel meetings (usually Tuesday and Friday) depending on abundance and stock composition. The announced Commercial TAC will be for the purpose of determining shares in pieces of salmon for the ITQ demonstration fishery only.

Fraser Sockeye	Area B	Area E	Area H
No. of Licences	126	227	43
Fleet Share of Fraser Sockeye	48.015%	24.849%	4.752%
Individual Licence Share (Fleet Share/# Licences)	0.38107%	0.10947%	0.11051%

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

2. OPENING AND CLOSING THE FISHERY

- a. Areas will be opened normally, using Variation Orders and Fishery Notices. Commercial fisheries will open after a Commercial TAC is identified.
- b. Certain fishing areas may be restricted to fisheries in order to avoid stocks of concern and to move the fleets into areas of lesser impact. Areas 12 and 13 as well as Areas 14, 16, 18, 20, and 29 may not be open at the same time due to species and stock composition, diversion rate, and/or observer coverage.
- c. If at any point at the start of, or during, the season there is no Commercial TAC available for Fraser Sockeye, or a conservation constraint (e.g. Cultus Sockeye exploitation rate constraint) limits further commercial Sockeye impacts, then the Department may close the fishery.

3. CATCH MONITORING REQUIREMENTS:

- a. Verification of at-sea releases is essential to the management of Fraser River Sockeye and other co-migrating stocks. Data collected by At-Sea Observers may be used to calculate fleet-wide releases.
- b. Poor compliance with permitting Observers on-board to collect this data will impact future fishing opportunities.
- c. The level of coverage for At-Sea Observers will be determined in-season based on areas open to fishing, effort, and gear type for each day of fishing.
- d. Start, end, pause, cancel, and daily catch reports (as per Conditions of Licence) must be made by, or on behalf of by a designated party, all Area B, Area E, and Area H vessel masters by cellular (call or text), land line, or satellite phone to the Salmon Catch Reporting Service Provider or by E-log (please refer to the Conditions of Licence).
- e. Vessel masters must complete a logbook or E-log entry for each day of fishing. The vessel master must print and sign their name and Fisher Identification Number (FIN) beside each record made in the paper harvest log.
- f. Mandatory fish hold checks will be performed.
- g. Conditions of Licence list the designated offload ports.
- h. For reference purposes, Area B Seine Fishery and Catch Reporting Requirements are attached in [Appendix 5A](#) for Johnstone Strait, Area 20 and Area 29. [Appendix](#)

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

[5B](#) includes further information regarding restrictions when fishing in designated seine test fishing locations.

4. CATCH VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS:

- a. Catch validation, which will include dockside and designated transport vessel landings, is mandatory and arrangements with a Department-authorized Landing Observer Service Provider must be arranged in advance by either Area B, Area E and Area H vessel masters or on behalf of vessel masters by a designated party.
- b. Licence holders that plan to harvest Fraser Sockeye are encouraged to register with the Landing Observer Service Provider in advance of the fishery to confirm arrangements. The Landing Observer Service Provider will be announced by Fishery Notice prior to the fishery. As much notice as possible should be given so the Landing Observer Service Provider can make arrangements for a Landing Observer to be present for the landing event, which is a mandatory licence requirement.
- c. A salmon Landing Observer shall be present during all landings of catch to record the number and weight of each species of salmon and bycatch (including non-salmon species) delivered.
- d. Upon validation of the catch (including bycatch species), the vessel master must review and sign the validation form. The catch data will be entered into the ITQ database by the service provider no later than 12 hours after the validation is complete.
- e. Prior to any landing of fish, the vessel master shall call in to the Landing Observer Service Provider and provide the following information:
 - vessel name;
 - vessel registration number;
 - name and Fisher Identification Number of the vessel master;
 - contact phone number;
 - date, time, port and location of landing of the fish;
 - name of fish buying station where fish are to be landed;
 - product type;
 - estimated number of pieces by species, by day;
 - area fished; and
 - number of sets made.
- f. All salmon shall be landed at one of the following locations:

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

Area B Seine: Campbell River, French Creek, Greater Vancouver, Port Hardy, Port McNeill, Port Renfrew, Quadra Island or to a transport vessel **designated** for the quota fishery.

Area E Gill Net: It is anticipated that the sites will be similar to those used during the 2025 Area E Sockeye ITQ fishery and include Steveston, Ladner, Surrey, New Westminster, Port Coquitlam, Maple Ridge and Mission, or a transport vessel **designated** for the quota fishery. Or if pre-arranged, any other mutually agreed upon location between the **designated** Landing Observer Service Provider and the vessel master.

Area H Troll: Campbell River, Comox, Cowichan Bay, French Creek, Greater Vancouver, Kelsey Bay, Nanaimo, Port Hardy, Port McNeill, Quadra Island or to a transport vessel designated for the quota fishery. Or if pre-arranged, any other mutually agreed upon location between the **designated** Landing Observer Service Provider and the vessel master.

5. AREA FISHING PLANS:

All fishing plans are very general and subject to change in-season following Fraser River Panel meetings. Fishery Notices will be posted throughout the season to ensure the most up to date information regarding the Area B, Area E and Area H fishing plans are available on a timely basis. [Appendix 5A](#) contains more detailed fishing plans for Area B Seine.

- a. **Areas 12 and 13:** Area B and Area H fisheries are typically planned for five to seven days per week. The start date for fisheries will be dependent on in-season information and confirmed by Fishery Notice. Fishing restrictions in test fishing areas are outlined in [Appendix 5B](#).
- b. **Areas 14 and 16:** Consideration may be given to Area B and Area H in-season for Fraser River Sockeye fisheries in Sabine Channel subject to Sakinaw Sockeye constraints, as well as constraints for other stocks of concern.
- c. **Areas 18 and 29:** Options for fishing off the river in Area 29 and in Area 18 for Area B and Area H will be confirmed by Fishery Notice. A proposal for an Area 29 in-river Fraser Sockeye demonstration fishery for Area B Seine is outlined in Section 13.1.6.5.3 of the 2026-27 IFMP. The Area E ITQ would occur in Areas 29(13), (14), (16), and (17), which is in the Fraser River main stem from Steveston to the Mission Bridge.
- d. **Area 20:** In 2014, the Area B Harvest Committee requested the Department review the Coho release mortality rate previously set at 70%; the release mortality rate was

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

set at 50%. The Coho release mortality rate will remain at 50% for the 2026 fishing season and observer coverage will be mandatory. The anticipated start date for the Area B fishery will be confirmed by Fishery Notice. Opportunities in this fishery will be dependent on in-season assessment information, diversion rate, and Coho impacts.

e. Other considerations:

- i. For 2026, a combination of fisheries closures as well as mandatory and voluntary measures will be in place to support prey availability for Southern Resident Killer Whales and to reduce physical and acoustic disturbances to these whales. Fishing restrictions help reduce prey competition, increase the availability of salmon and decrease vessel disturbance in key SRKW foraging areas in their identified critical habitat. More information in Section 5.4.
- ii. Given ongoing declines in Interior Fraser River Steelhead escapement and the designation of the Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead as Endangered by COSEWIC, DFO has implemented a rolling window closure throughout Southern BC to protect Interior Fraser River Steelhead. Areas and dates for the window closure are identified in [Appendix 7](#).
- iii. To ensure test fishing information is not compromised during the ITQ fishery, restrictions are in effect when fishing near assessment boats. Subarea and opening times will be modified in-season and announced on the grounds by DFO representatives and by Fishery Notice. If any conflicts arise, changes to the opening times and fishing areas will be announced by Fishery Notice. More information is provided in [Appendix 5B](#).

6. QUOTA TRANSFERS:

- a. Licence eligibility holders are strongly encouraged to designate a signing authority prior to the start of the fishery. The designation form allows an individual to authorize a quota transfer if the licence eligibility holder is fishing and unable to complete the required quota transfer application. Licence holders can authorize up to three individuals to act as a temporary signing authority by filling out a designation form. Quota reallocation forms and designation forms will be available online at: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/licence-permis/licence-commercial-permis-eng.html>

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

- b. Licence holders or designates are encouraged to register with the Quota Officer prior to the fishing season. The contact information will be used in season to contact the licence holder, designate or skipper in the event of an overage or discrepancy with catch data. Licence holders/designates can confirm their available quota by contacting the Quota Officer. The Quota Office's contact information will be communicated by Fishery Notice.
- c. Quota may be reallocated as a percent (for the season) or by pieces (for example, to temporarily cover an overage). Note that once any pieces have been transferred from a licence you can no longer transfer the entire remaining percentage.
- d. Quota will be transferable within each licence area (e.g. Area B to Area B, Area E to Area E, or Area H to Area H) as well as between licence areas (e.g. Area B to Area H, Area E to B, etc.). The Department may consider transfers outside of Area B, Area E, and Area H. Refer to Section [12.5.1](#) Transfer Guidelines for the Temporary Transfer of Commercial Salmon Shares of the 2026-2027 South Coast Salmon IFMP for more details.
- e. When the Department has received for processing two or more conflicting requests for trading, all of the requests for trading will be denied.
- f. Given the short window of fishing opportunity, quota transfers will be permitted while vessels are on-grounds; however, if a vessel is in an overage situation they cannot continue to fish until that overage has been covered.
- g. DFO staff will enter the quota transfer into the ITQ database during normal working hours (8am to 4pm Monday to Friday). If required, additional hours will be available in season.

7. OVERAGES:

- a. Overages must be covered by a quota reallocation within **48 hours** of landing and validation.
- b. The 48-hour rule will be included in the 2026-27 Area B, Area E, and Area H Conditions of Licence to align with the ITQ guidelines.
- c. Fishing activity must cease when quota limits are reached, and vessels must not continue to fish for other species as bycatch (as per Conditions of Licence).
- d. Vessels are not permitted to recommence fishing until all overages have been covered (as per Conditions of Licence).
- e. If a vessel recommences fishing when in an overage situation, Conservation and Protection (C&P) will be notified immediately.

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- f. An increase in the TAC cannot be used to cover an overage. The quota being transferred to a vessel in an overage situation must be quota that was available prior to the TAC increase.
- g. Overages resulting from a run downgrade must be covered by a quota reallocation.
- h. An overage occurring because of a run downgrade and subsequent decreases in the TAC will not have to be covered if the fishery is closed for the duration of the season.
- i. When there's uncertainty in the run size, the Department may not release all the TAC at once. A stepped approach to releasing TAC may be used until there is high confidence in the run size.

8. VESSEL TRANSPORTING (TRANSSHIPPING):

- a. Area B, Area E, and Area H vessels will be permitted to move fish from one licensed vessel to another licensed vessel (Area B, E, and H only) on the grounds.
- b. If a vessel transports and lands fish from other licensed vessels participating in the quota fishery, quota reallocations must be made within 48 hours of landing with the catch assigned to the landing vessel only when the landing vessel has a quota overage.
- c. All vessels are required to document in the Offload Catch Report section of the logbook or E-log when fish has been pooled (transshipped) onto another vessel or vessels.
- d. Transporting vessels must document in a Transfer Log as required in Part 4 Section 5 of the Conditions of 2026-27 Salmon Area B, Area E or Area H Licence, and provide to the Landing Observer Service Provider the name of the vessel that caught the fish, the date the fish were caught, the location (subarea) in which the fish were caught and the amount of each species retained and landed.
- e. Refer to Part 4 of the Conditions of 2026-27 Salmon Area B, Area E, or Area H Licence for all transporting requirements.
- f. As stated in Part 4 Section 1(2) of the Conditions of 2026-27 Salmon Area B, Area E, and Area H Licence, when receiving commercially caught salmon aboard the transfer vessel, salmon that are prohibited from being caught or retained in the fishery shall not be onboard the transfer vessel.

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

9. TRANSPORT VESSEL (PACKER) VALIDATION INFORMATION:

- a. Refer to the Conditions of 2026 Transport Licence for all transporting requirements.
- b. Vessel masters shall deliver only to transport vessels designated for the quota fishery.
- c. To become a transport vessel designated for the Area B, Area E and Area H Fraser Sockeye ITQ Demonstration Fishery, refer to the Fishery Notice released prior to the opening or contact the Fishery Manager for more information.
- d. All transport vessels for the quota fishery carrying multiple vessels catch will be required to take onboard a Landing Observer to complete validation of catch.
- e. On-board Landing Observers will follow the Landing Observer Service Provider's established procedures for verifying catch and performing mandatory hold checks.
- f. Any transport vessels wanting to carry fish without an onboard Landing Observer will have to contact the manager identified in the Fishery Notice released prior to the opening to obtain approval.
 - i. Transport vessels without an onboard Landing Observer will only be able to carry catch from one vessel participating in the ITQ fishery and must not have any salmon of any species caught in another fishery.
 - ii. Transport vessels without an onboard Landing Observer are responsible for recording and providing to the Dockside Monitoring Service Provider the Hail Number verifying the landing vessels contacted the Landing Observer Service Provider prior to delivering to the transport vessels. If the landing vessel does not have a hail number, the transport vessel shall instruct the vessel master to call the Landing Observer Service Provider. These transport vessel masters are responsible for assuring that all fish are offloaded and that the totals are recorded on the transfer log, as required in the Conditions of 2026 Transport Licence.

10. VESSEL VALIDATION INFORMATION:

- a. To avoid discrepancies in quota and validation records, vessel masters must review and sign the validation slip as required in Part 1 Section 7 of the Conditions of 2026-27 Salmon Area B, Area E and Area H Licence.
- b. When reporting catch to the service provider, vessel masters must provide an accurate breakdown of daily catch.

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

11. SERVICE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS:

- a. The service provider is to provide DFO with copies of all validation and tally forms. Copies of the validation forms must be provided to DFO within 24 hours of completing the validation, and tally forms must be provided after the fishery closes for the season or upon request by the Department.
- b. The catch (including bycatch species) validation data will be entered into the ITQ database by the service provider no later than **12 hours** after the validation is complete.
- c. The service provider is required to perform quality assurance and quality control checks on all data entered into the ITQ database both in-season and post-season. Regular checks must be completed to verify the accuracy of the data entry.

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)**APPENDIX 5A: AREA B SEINE FISHERY AND CATCH REPORTING REQUIREMENTS BY AREA**

This document is for information purposes only. Fishers must have a valid 2026-27 Salmon Area B Seine licence, complete with Conditions of 2026-27 Salmon Area B Seine Licence. Where there is a discrepancy between this document and the Conditions of 2026-27 Area B Seine Licence, the Conditions of Licence shall prevail.

Johnstone Strait (Area 12 and 13)	
Opening Dates and Times	Seines may open, as per in-season Fishery Notices, in portions of Areas 12 and 13. Fishery openings and closures may also be announced on the grounds by the Charter Patrol vessel.
Target Species	In Areas 12 and 13, the target species in the fishery is Fraser River Sockeye subject to in-season abundance information. There will be non-retention of Coho, Chum*, Chinook and Steelhead. *Closed to retention to avoid summer-timed Chum stocks.
Gear Specifics	Minimum Bunt Mesh 70 mm. The use of power skiffs is not permitted. Brailing and sorting of catch is mandatory, as is the use of operational revival tanks.
Monitoring	The Department will work with industry and service providers pre-season to develop a monitoring plan that satisfies the minimum monitoring requirements of the Department
On Ground Additional On Ground Reporting Requirements (Beyond Conditions of Licence)	Additional Test Fishing Zone Catch Reports may be required. The Test Fishing Zone Catch Reports are additional catch reporting requirements that may be in effect while fishing in the Test Fishing Zones. Please see Appendix 5B for more information.

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

Test Fishing	Vessel masters are reminded that test fishing vessels will be operating during the fishery in Areas 12 and 13. Vessels planning to fish near the test fishing locations are not to interfere with test fishing operations and may only fish once the test fishing vessel has indicated that they are finished at a test site. Test fishing information is a key component of the in-season assessment of Fraser River Sockeye returns. If interference with test fishing activities occurs, fishery closures in test fishing locations will be considered. See Appendix 5B for more detail pertaining to fishing in the Test Fishing Zones. When fishing in Subarea 12-3, it is important to differentiate between fishing in Subarea 12-3W (west of Robson Bight) and 12-3E (east of Robson Bight), when submitting daily catch report.
DFO Contacts	Madeline Wanless (Madeline.Wanless@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

Juan de Fuca (Area 20)	
Opening Dates and Times	Seines may open, as per in-season Fishery Notices, in a portion of Subarea 20-1, 20-3 and 20-4, in waters deeper than 55 meters (30 fathoms).
Target Species	In Area 20, the target species in this fishery are Fraser River Sockeye Salmon, subject to in-season abundance information. There will be non-retention of Coho, Chum*, Chinook, and Steelhead. *Closed to retention to avoid US bound Chum stocks.
Gear Specifics	Minimum Bunt Mesh 100 mm. Power skiffs are permitted to be used. Brailing and sorting of catch is mandatory, as is the use of operational revival tanks.
Monitoring	The Department will work with industry and service providers pre-season to seek feedback and develop a monitoring plan that satisfies the minimum monitoring requirements of the Department. The level

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

	of monitoring will be based on areas open to fishing, effort, and gear. It is anticipated that 100% monitoring coverage (either at-sea observer or electronic monitoring) will be required in Area 20.
Additional On Ground Reporting Requirements (Beyond Conditions of Licence)	<u>On-Grounds Reporting</u>: Upon completion of a set (after brailing is completed), the vessel master shall report to the At-Sea Observer the set number for the current day's fishing, time the set was made, set location (grid area) and the number of all species of fish caught and retained or released. Log sheets for recording and reporting individual set information will be provided by DFO or the At-Sea Observer prior to commencement of the fishery. The observer will relay the information to the DFO manager upon completion of the set. As communications may be limited, the set-by-set information may need to be provided to the DFO Fishery Manager at the end of each fishing day. The At-Sea Observer or DFO will provide the fishing vessel skippers participating in this fishery a chart prior to the commencement of the fishery. This chart divides the fishing area into grid areas and catches by set will be recorded in correspondence to the grid areas.
Test Fishing	Vessel masters are reminded that test fishing vessels will be operating during the fishery in Area 20. Vessels planning to fish near the test fishing locations are not to interfere with test fishing operations and may only fish once the test fishing vessel has indicated that they are finished at a test site. Test fishing information is a key component of the in-season assessment of Fraser River Sockeye returns. If interference with test fishing activities occurs, fishery closures in test fishing locations will be implemented. Please see Appendix 5B for more detail pertaining to fishing in the Test Fishing Zones.
DFO Contacts	Andrea Haas (Andrea.Haas@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

Strait of Georgia Gulf and Fraser River (Area 29)	
Opening Dates and Times	Seines may open, as per in-season Fishery Notices, in portions of Area 29. Typical Subareas that may open include 29-3, 29-4, and 29-6. Options to fish in the latter Subareas, as well as portions of Subareas 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10 will be determined in-season and announced by Fishery Notice. Fishery openings and closures will also be announced by Fishery Notice. A review of the Interior Fraser River Steelhead Window Closure boundary in portions of Area 29 was conducted to look at harmonizing sub-areas in Area 29 in order to maintain fishing opportunity in Area 29 while aligning with the intent of the IFR Steelhead rolling window closure. See Section 13 for fishery-specific details.
Target Species	In Area 29, the target species in this fishery are Fraser River Sockeye Salmon, subject to in-season abundance information. The use of At-Sea Observers will be required to gather samples during these fisheries. There will be non-retention of Coho, Chum*, Chinook and Steelhead. *Closed to retention to avoid summer-timed Chum stocks.
Gear Specifics	Minimum Bunt Mesh 70 mm. Power skiffs are permitted to be used. Brailing and sorting of catch is mandatory, as is the use of operational revival tanks.
Monitoring	The Department will work with industry and service providers pre-season to seek feedback and develop a monitoring plan that satisfies the minimum monitoring requirements of the Department. The level of monitoring will be based on areas open to fishing, effort, and gear. It is anticipated that the minimum monitoring requirements for Area 29 Fraser Sockeye-directed fisheries will be similar to previous years: if four or fewer vessels are participating in this fishery, all vessels must carry a certified at-sea observer or use electronic monitoring. If five or more vessels are participating in this fishery, a minimum of

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

	four vessels must carry a certified at-sea observer or use electronic monitoring at all times. Observers or electronic monitoring will be coordinated through the Area B Harvest Committee and the service provider.
Additional On Ground Reporting Requirements (Beyond Conditions of Licence)	Additional reporting to the At-Sea Observer is required for vessels who take an Observer on board.
Test Fishing	Vessel masters are reminded that test fishing vessels may be operating during the fishery in Area 29. Vessels planning to fish near the test fishing locations are not to interfere with test fishing operations and may only fish once the test fishing vessel has indicated that they are finished at a test site. Test fishing information is a key component of the in-season assessment of Fraser River Sockeye returns. If interference with test fishing activities occurs, fishery closures in test fishing locations will be implemented. Please see Appendix 5B for more detail pertaining to fishing in the Test Fishing Zones.
Notes	Vessels with operational E-logs are not required to call or record catch reports in a Salmon Logbook; however, the data, as outlined in the requirements in items 1-5 in the Catch Reporting Requirements in Appendix 5 , must be submitted electronically as per the Conditions of Licence.
DFO Contacts	Pamela Pook (Pamela.Pook@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

**APPENDIX 5B: 2026 FRASER SOCKEYE COMMERCIAL FISHERY
RESTRICTIONS IN DESIGNATED SEINE TEST FISHING LOCATIONS**

In-season test-fishing assessment information in the marine approach areas is critical in estimating abundances of returning Fraser River Sockeye and identifying available harvest levels. Commercial fisheries must be structured and scheduled to ensure that test fishing assessment information is not compromised. This is particularly critical in the Area B Seine Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) fishery which provides for additional days of fishing than would be permitted under a derby-style fishery.

1. JOHNSTONE STRAIT TEST FISHING AREA INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

- a. Priority access for the test vessel is required in all designated test fishing locations.
- b. Vessels are not permitted to fish at test fishing sites prior to the test fishing vessel completing their assessment set for the day.
- c. Test Fishing Zone Catch Reports are required to be filled out for Area B Seine vessels that fish in Test Fishing Zones.
 - i. Seine vessels must have set-by-set data sheets or E-logs onboard while fishing in the Test Fishing Zone. Data sheets will be available for pickup from the test vessel, from the Charter Patrol in that area or electronically from the Fishery Manager.
 - ii. Vessels fishing in the Test Fishing Zone are required to record set-by-set catch and effort information; this includes the duration of set times from time when the net goes in the water until the time when the rings are up (closed). E-log software has been modified so that vessel masters are able to send individual set-by-set information.
 - iii. Please note: E-log software can handle set-by-set catch information, but at this time, set times and duration of sets cannot be reported by the E-log software. Vessel masters are requested to record set times and set durations separate from the E-log entries.
- d. DFO and the Pacific Salmon Commission will need cooperation from as many Area B Seine vessels as possible fishing in the Test Fishing Zone to record set-by-set information.

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

- e. Area B Seine vessels must hail their intention to fish in the Test Fishing Zone to the test fishing vessel or to the on-grounds Charter Patrol vessel prior to fishing.

2. AREA 12 – AREA B SEINE ITQ FISHERY RESTRICTIONS

- a. Subarea 12-3 is a Test Fishing Zone.
- b. Catch reports must differentiate between fish caught in 12-3W (West of Robson Bight) and 12-3E (East of Robson Bight). Test fishing vessels will announce their fishing pattern on the grounds each day during the ITQ fishery opening.
- c. Test fishing vessel will start at the lower areas 1st (Fine Beach or Robson Bight) and work seaward towards Blinkhorn.
- d. Test fishing vessel may start fishing as early as 07:00 hours.
- e. Below Robson Bight will be assessed every 2nd day; Robson Bight will be assessed every day.
- f. Test fishing vessel's first set each day may be as early as 07:00 hours at either Fine Beach or Robson Bight and will proceed seaward towards Blinkhorn. During this time no vessel will be permitted to fish in front of the test fishing vessel. The test fishing vessel will announce when they have closed their net, after which ITQ vessels can commence fishing in that location.
- g. Vessels are not permitted to fish within the entire test fishing area from Fine Beach to Blinkhorn while the test fishing vessel is active. They may only enter the area behind the test fishing vessel once it has closed its net and indicated that they are done fishing at that site. If there is interference with the test fishing vessel, additional time and area closures will be implemented during the fishery between Fine Beach and Blinkhorn.

3. AREA 13 – AREA B SEINE ITQ FISHERY RESTRICTIONS

- a. Loggers Point to Little Bear Bight is a Test Fishing Zone.
- b. Regular lower boundary in effect at Loggers Point.
- c. Vessels must wait to fish until the test fishing vessel has closed its net and indicated that they are done fishing at that site. If there is interference with the test fishing vessel, additional time and area closures will be implemented during the fishery starting with a lower boundary at Bodega Point.

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

APPENDIX 5C: AREA 29 GULF TROLL ASSESSMENT FISHERY

In 2026 there will be no Area 29 Gulf Troll Assessment Fishery. The management of Fraser Salmon in Area 29 is facilitated by the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) and the Fraser River Panel. During Fraser Sockeye dominant years, there is an established Gulf troll test fishery which helps the PSC with in-season run size estimates of Late run Sockeye and provides some indications of holding behaviour. However, during non-dominant Fraser Sockeye years, there is a gap of information. Therefore, a Gulf troll assessment fishery during non-dominant Sockeye years could provide information on Late run Sockeye and also the ratio of Sockeye to Pink Salmon in Troll fisheries. This information could help inform Sockeye-directed commercial Troll fisheries (when abundance is identified in non-dominant years) and/or Pink-directed commercial fisheries. The goals of this fishery are to assess the approach areas of the Fraser River in Area 29 using commercial troll gear to predict Late run Sockeye proportion and distribution, species composition, and indicate presence of delaying Late run Sockeye. The ability to assess all components will be determined pre- season based on staff capacity.

FISHING PLAN**1. PARTICIPANTS**

One Area H Troll licence holder to start. Additional vessels will be considered based on available commercial TAC.

2. ALLOCATION

Catch allocated to this fishery will come from the CCTAC, and gear and species allocation outlined in the 2026-27 IFMP and 2026-27 Area H Troll Conditions of Licence.

3. GEAR

Troll gear will be used given the low Sockeye release mortality rate (10%). Gear requirements are outlined in the 2026-27 Area H Troll Conditions of Licence.

4. AREA AND TIME

Subareas 29-3 (excluding that portion to protect SRKW), 29-4 and 29-6. The fishing activity will align with the PSC Gulf Troll Test Fishing study design

(<https://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information/test-fishing-results/about-the-test-fisheries/>). A decision around which quadrants will be fished will be

APPENDIX 5: SOCKEYE ITQ DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES (AREA B, AREA E, AREA H)

made in season. The fishery will occur prior to the Interior Fraser River Steelhead (IFR) window closure in mid-September ([Appendix 7](#)).

5. SPECIES

The target species is Fraser Sockeye and/or Pink, depending on the year and/or available CCTAC. Non-retention of Chinook, Coho, Chum, and Steelhead. In years with no Fraser Sockeye CCTAC available, non-retention will also be in place for Sockeye.

6. MONITORING

An At-Sea Observer will be required on the vessel at all times. Final monitoring decisions will be made in-season.

Area H Troll Fraser Sockeye fisheries (directed or non-directed) are managed as an ITQ fishery. Dockside validation is a mandatory component of ITQ fisheries per the 2026-27 Area H Troll Conditions of Licence.

Start, end, pause, cancel and daily catch reports will be required by phone-in or E-log. Additional reporting and bio-sampling to the appropriate Departmental staff will be required.

7. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The assessment fishery may help inform Late run Sockeye proportion and distribution, species composition, and indicate presence of delaying Late run Sockeye.

APPENDIX 6: LONGER TERM COMMERCIAL CLOSURES OR MITIGATION

APPENDIX 6: LONGER-TERM COMMERCIAL CLOSURES OR MITIGATION

In 2021, as part of immediate conservation measures under the [Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative \(PSSI\)](#), the Minister announced several new commercial fishery closures to protect stocks of conservation concern. These closures were implemented on an interim basis in 2021 and were reviewed for longer term closures beginning in 2022 after additional consultation with affected groups.

Beginning in 2022, the Department is continuing to take a more precautionary approach to managing fisheries that interact with stocks of conservation concern to help stabilize and support rebuilding of these depressed populations. The Department identified commercial fisheries where there is a high risk of interception of stocks of conservation concern in targeted fisheries and/or by-catch. For these fisheries, the Department has two approaches for managing the identified stocks of concern including:

1. Longer-term closure; or,
2. No longer-term closure and implementation of additional mitigation measures.

The Department will continue to implement longer term closures for fisheries identified in Table 0-1. These closures are expected to remain in place until there is clear evidence of stock growth and abundance is above levels associated with the critical zone or Wild Salmon Policy red zone. Where feasible, Table 13–47 outlines additional mitigation measures that will be implemented in the identified fisheries in lieu of a longer-term closure.

For any commercial fisheries that are closed, the allocations will remain with the original fleet and fish will be allowed to pass to spawning grounds. Opportunities for additional commercial harvest may be considered in locations where stocks of concern will not be encountered.

All other commercial fisheries not identified as longer-term closures will remain closed unless conditions are met for an opening based on harvest decision rules and conservation criteria identified in this Integrated Fisheries Management Plan.

The impacts from the long-term closures will be mitigated by a commercial licence retirement program and a First Nations communal commercial licence alternation program, that both ran from 2022-2025. As well, additional initiatives to support transformation of the fishery will help to mitigate impacts of reduced harvest opportunities.

APPENDIX 6: LONGER TERM COMMERCIAL CLOSURES OR MITIGATION

Table 0–1: Longer Term Commercial Closures

Fishery	Area	Group
Fraser Chinook	29	Area E Gill net
Fraser Chum	29	Musqueam EO (gill net)*
Fraser Chum	29	Tsawwassen EO (gill net)*
Fraser Chum	29	Sto:lo EO*
Fraser Chum	29	Area E Gill net
Nitinat Chum	21	Area B Seine**
Nitinat Chum	21	Area E Gill net**
Johnstone Strait Mixed Stock Chum	11, 12, 13	Area D Gill net
Barkley Wild Chum	23	Area D Gill net
Clayoquot Wild Chum	24	Area D Gill net

*Closed for gill net gear only, use of selective gear may be permitted

**Closed in Area 21, may proceed in Area 22

Table 0–2: Additional Mitigation Measures Beginning in 2022

Fishery	Area	Group	Additional Mitigation Measures
Fraser Chinook (Summer 4i)	29	Secwepemc Demo	Use of large mesh gillnets that reduce impacts on smaller bodied non target salmon. Timed later to target the abundant Summer 4i Chinook and significantly reduce impacts on Chinook stocks of concern. Conduct in near terminal areas that avoid many of the stocks of concern

APPENDIX 6: LONGER TERM COMMERCIAL CLOSURES OR MITIGATION

			that would be present in the mainstem Fraser. Low effort 1-3 gillnets and catch.
Fraser Sockeye	29	Musqueam EO	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Support terminal access when possible as well as more selective gear that will allow release of non-target bycatch.
Fraser Sockeye	29	Tsawwassen EO	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Support terminal access when possible as well as more selective gear that will allow release of non-target bycatch.
Fraser Sockeye	29	Sto:lo EO	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Support terminal access when possible as well as more selective gear that will allow release of non-target bycatch.
Fraser Sockeye	29	HFA Demo	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Support terminal access when possible as well as more selective gear that will allow release of non-target bycatch.

APPENDIX 6: LONGER TERM COMMERCIAL CLOSURES OR MITIGATION

Fraser Sockeye	29	UFISH Demo	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Support terminal access when possible as well as more selective gear that will allow release of non-target bycatch.
Fraser Sockeye	29	Secwepemc Demo	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Support terminal access when possible as well as more selective gear that will allow release of non-target bycatch.
Fraser Sockeye	11-14, 18, 20 29	Area B Seine	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Avoiding fishing in areas with a known high by-catch encounter rate and/or relocating fishing effort if high amount of bycatch is encountered.
Fraser Sockeye	11-15	Area D Gill net	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Continue to work with Area D to review and determine if additional mitigation measures to avoid bycatch encounters and increase release mortality would be effective.

APPENDIX 6: LONGER TERM COMMERCIAL CLOSURES OR MITIGATION

Fraser Sockeye	29	Area E Gill net	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Continue to work with Area E to review and determine if additional mitigation measures to avoid bycatch encounters and increase release mortality would be effective.
Fraser Sockeye	11, 12, 20, 111, 121-127	Area G Troll	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Avoiding fishing in areas with a known high bycatch encounter rate and/or relocating fishing effort if high amount of by-catch is encountered.
Fraser Sockeye	11-14, 18, 29	Area H Troll	Abundance Based Management and a more cautious escapement plan to decrease overall exploitation rates on Sockeye stocks of concern. Avoiding fishing in areas with a known high bycatch encounter rate and/or relocating fishing effort if high amount of bycatch is encountered.

APPENDIX 7: ROLLING WINDOW CLOSURES TO PROTECT INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

APPENDIX 7: ROLLING WINDOW CLOSURES TO PROTECT INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

This table outlines Interior Fraser River (IFR) Steelhead window closure dates by area. These are generalized dates that apply to the entire fishing area unless otherwise stated in the species specific fishing plans contained in the yearly released South coast IFMP. Fishing plans outlined in the yearly released South coast IFMP may include slight modifications to these dates that result from applying the closure window to more specific fishing areas. Note that the duration of the closure window will not be shortened in applying these adjustments.

Window closures are INCLUSIVE of both the START and END dates shown in the table below. For any given area, the first day fishing may occur following a closure is the day following the END date in the table.

Also note that all sub-Areas listed in this table under the “Fraser River” section will be included as part of “Fraser River fisheries”. For additional clarity, all fisheries occurring in Areas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10 are included within the Fraser River measures.

Finally, please note the term “commercial” in the following tables includes all communally-licenced First Nations fisheries that permit sales, such as Economic Opportunity, Harvest Agreement, and Demonstration fisheries, as well as non-First Nations commercial openings.

APPENDIX 7: ROLLING WINDOW CLOSURES TO PROTECT INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

Table 0-3: Interior Fraser River Steelhead Rolling Window Closure Dates by Area

Fishery Location		27-day window closure (commercial troll fisheries and FSC fisheries occurring in the Fraser River)		42-day window closure (commercial drift and set gillnet, purse seine, beach seine, and shallow seine fisheries and recreational fisheries occurring in the Fraser River)	
		Start	End	Start	End
Fraser River	Area 29: 29-6, 29-7, 29-9, and 29-10	26-Sep	22-Oct	19-Sep	30-Oct
	Mouth to Port Mann Bridge	26-Sep	22-Oct	19-Sep	30-Oct
	Port Mann Bridge to Mission	28-Sep	24-Oct	21-Sep	1-Nov
	Mission to Hope	29-Sep	25-Oct	22-Sep	2-Nov
	Hope to Sawmill Creek	3-Oct	29-Oct	26-Sep	6-Nov
	Sawmill Creek to Lytton (Thompson Confluence)	5-Oct	31-Oct	28-Sep	8-Nov
	Lytton to Texas Creek	8-Oct	3-Nov	1-Oct	11-Nov
	Texas Creek to Kelly Creek	10-Oct	5-Nov	3-Oct	13-Nov
	Kelly Creek to Deadman Creek	13-Oct	8-Nov	6-Oct	16-Nov
	Deadman Creek to Chilcotin River	16-Oct	11-Nov	9-Oct	19-Nov
	Chilcotin River	19-Oct	14-Nov	12-Oct	22-Nov
	Thompson River – Thompson Confluence to Bonaparte	8-Oct	3-Nov	1-Oct	11-Nov
	Thompson River – Bonaparte River to Kamloops Lake	12-Oct	7-Nov	5-Oct	15-Nov

APPENDIX 7: ROLLING WINDOW CLOSURES TO PROTECT INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

Fishery Location		27-day window closure (commercial troll fisheries and FSC fisheries occurring in the Fraser River)		42-day window closure (commercial drift and set gillnet, purse seine, beach seine, and shallow seine fisheries and recreational fisheries occurring in the Fraser River)	
		Start	End	Start	End
Strait of Georgia	Area 29: 29-8	28-Sep	24-Oct	21-Sep	1-Nov
	Area 29: 29-1 to 29-5	23-Sep	19-Oct	16-Sep	27-Oct
	Area 28	23-Sep	19-Oct	16-Sep	27-Oct
	Area 18	24-Sep	20-Oct	17-Sep	28-Oct
	Area 17	23-Sep	19-Oct	16-Sep	27-Oct
	Area 16	22-Sep	18-Oct	15-Sep	26-Oct
	Area 15	21-Sep	17-Oct	14-Sep	25-Oct
	Area 14	21-Sep	17-Oct	14-Sep	25-Oct
Johnstone Strait	Area 13	17-Sep	13-Oct	11-Sep	22-Oct
	Area 12	12-Sep	8-Oct	6-Sep	17-Oct
	Area 11	11-Sep	7-Oct	5-Sep	16-Oct
	Area 111	10-Sep	6-Oct	4-Sep	15-Oct
West Coast Vancouver Island	Area 19	22-Sep	18-Oct	15-Sep	26-Oct
	Area 20	19-Sep	15-Oct	12-Sep	23-Oct
	Area 21	18-Sep	14-Oct	11-Sep	22-Oct
	Area 121	18-Sep	14-Oct	11-Sep	22-Oct

APPENDIX 7: ROLLING WINDOW CLOSURES TO PROTECT INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

Area 123	16-Sep	12-Oct	9-Sep	20-Oct
Area 124	13-Sep	9-Oct	6-Sep	17-Oct
Area 125	11-Sep	7-Oct	4-Sep	15-Oct
Area 26	8-Sep	4-Oct	1-Sep	12-Oct
Area 126	8-Sep	4-Oct	1-Sep	12-Oct
Area 27	6-Sep	2-Oct	30-Aug	10-Oct
Area 127	6-Sep	2-Oct	30-Aug	10-Oct

Table 0-4 outlines Pacific Fishery Management Areas that are understood to fall outside of the migratory path of IFR Steelhead and will not be subject to window closures implemented for IFR Steelhead conservation. Additional details for portions of areas listed below will be contained in the species specific fishing plans in the yearly released Southern IFMP.

Please note that tributaries of the Fraser River are also **excluded** from IFR Steelhead window closures, but are not listed in this table.

APPENDIX 7: ROLLING WINDOW CLOSURES TO PROTECT INTERIOR FRASER RIVER STEELHEAD

Table 0-4: Terminal fishery areas that are excluded from IFR Steelhead window closures.

Area	Sub Area Description
11	11-3 to 11-10
12	12-22, 12-23, 12-25 to 12-48
13	13-20, 13-21, 13-22, 13-24, 13-37, 13-38, 13-42, 13-43 portions of 13-3, 13-5, 13-19
14	14-1, 14-8, 14-10, 14-11, 14-14, 14-15 portions of 14-4, 14-5, 14-7 and 14-9
15	15-4, 15-6 portions of 15-1, 15-2, 15-5
16	16-3 to 16-16
17	17-2 to 17-9, 17-13 to 17-21 portions of 17-12
18	18-7 and 18-8 portions of 18-6
19	19-7 to 19-12
20	20-2, 20-6, 20-7
22	Entire Area
23	All Sub-Areas
24	All Sub-Areas
25	All Sub-Areas
26	26-1 to 26-10
27	27-3, 27-7 to 27-11 portions of 27-2
28	28-3 to 28-5, 28-11 to 28-14 portions of 28-2

APPENDIX 8: 2026 SALMON OUTLOOK

The preliminary 2026 Pacific Salmon Outlook document can be found on the DFO website:
<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pacific-smon-pacifique/science/research-recherche/smon-summ-somm-eng.html>

APPENDIX 9: WCVI FIRST NATION CHINOOK BIOLOGICAL GOAL SETTING

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Background

Establishing clear biological designation goals for hatchery-influenced salmon populations is foundational to DFO's hatchery modernization efforts. These goals, expressed using Biological Designations and associated Proportionate Natural Influence (PNI) ranges (Table 0-5), are intended to help guide long-term enhancement and harvest decisions. These goals help provide a transparent and consistent framework for monitoring the interaction between the benefits of enhancement with genetic risks.

Table 0 – 5 Biological designations for salmon populations, with associated descriptions and metrics (DFO 2024).

<i>Biological Designation</i>	<i>PNI</i>	<i>WSP Wild Fish (%)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<i>Wild</i>	N/A	> 92	Populations that do not have hatchery programs; straying from out-of-basin hatchery production is limited to <3% per year.
<i>Wild-stray influenced</i>	N/A	< 92	Populations that receive out-of-basin strays at rates that >3%. Majority of salmon are wild, but gene modelling suggests a long-term decline in PNI.
<i>Integrated - Wild</i>	≥ 0.80	> 50	Enhanced populations in which wild salmon are the majority and gene flow is dominated by the natural environment. Maintaining wild adaptive traits is paramount and risk tolerance is low.
<i>Integrated - Transition</i>	≥0.5	> 13 - < 50	Enhanced populations in which natural origin salmon are the majority and gene flow is dominated by the natural environment. Trade-offs are required, allowing moderate hatchery genetic influence while maintaining dominant natural genetic contribution.
<i>Integrated - Hatchery</i>	< 0.5	< 13	Enhanced populations in which hatchery origin salmon are the majority and gene flow is dominated by the hatchery environment. Conditionally appropriate only where high levels of hatchery influence are explicitly accepted to meet

APPENDIX 9: WCVI FIRST NATION CHINOOK BIOLOGICAL GOAL SETTING

			defined objectives—such as supporting harvest, assessment, or short-term conservation.

DFO’s enhanced Contribution Guidelines outline the appropriateness of each biological designation depending on the primary enhancement objective (harvest, assessment, conservation, rebuilding, or stewardship), the associated tolerance for genetic risk, and the methodology for making PNI calculations (DFO 2024). DFO identified “integrated-wild” (PNI > 0.8) as an optimal biological designation for an enhanced population. Recognizing that trade-offs may differ by population and enhancement objective, a pilot process was undertaken on the West Coast of Vancouver Island (WCVI) to document First Nation long-term biological goals by Chinook population. This initiative was introduced in the 2025/26 Southern BC IFMP, with a commitment to include the complete list of population-specific goals in this years IFMP.

Establishing First Nations’ biological goals for Chinook salmon on the WCVI aligns with the Wild Salmon Policy (DFO 2005), the WCVI Chinook Rebuilding Plan (DFO 2025), and DFO’s Enhanced Contribution Guidelines (DFO 2024). Having a clear documented understanding of local First Nations goals can help inform future enhancement planning and decision-making, including identifying priorities for reducing stray impacts, increasing PNI through broodstock selection and spawning strategies, and informing discussions where biological goals, enhancement benefits, and harvest objectives intersect.

Process and Results

In 2024 and 2025 DFO-SEP engaged in a pilot process to establish First Nation’s biological goals of WCVI Chinook populations. The objective was to document wildness priorities, Proportionate Natural Influence, rebuilding status, and stock abundance. This approach included presenting empirical data and enhancement scenarios to illustrate potential trade-offs associated with different enhancement and management pathways, supporting informed discussion on the relative importance of wildness alongside other benefits such as fisheries.

Through this pilot, First Nation’s biological goals were documented for WCVI Chinook populations (Table 0-5) using the established designation categories. Results show that, across the region, Nation recommended biological goals are generally *wilder* than current biological designation status (ex. currently Integrated-Hatchery status with a long-term goal of Integrated-Transition, or Integrated-Wild status) except in Clayoquot Sound where low Chinook abundance has led First Nations to prioritize increasing population size over wildness. Some Nations expressed interest in having more or new enhancement to support rebuilding or conservation on systems. Nations generally emphasized the importance of maintaining wild genetic influence in naturally produced populations, reducing hatchery stray impacts, and, where large-scale hatcheries exist, clearly articulating acceptable trade-offs between harvest

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benefits and wildness objectives. Results from this pilot process will be used to inform future WCVI Chinook decision making processes.

Table 0 – 6 West Coast Vancouver Island Biological Designation Goal Setting

Area	Nation	Population	Enhancement Objective	Current Biological Designation Status	First Nation's Target Biological Designation Goal
Barkley	Yuulu?il?ath	Thornton C.	Harvest	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Hatchery
		Nahmint R.	Rebuilding	Integrated-Transition	Integrated-Wild
	Toquaht	Toquaht R.	Rebuilding	Unknown	Integrated-Wild
	Uchucklesaht	Clemens C.	Rebuilding	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Hatchery to Integrated-Wild
	Huu-ay-aht	Sarita R.	Harvest	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Transition to Integrated-Wild
	Tseshah/ Hupacasath	Somass R./Stamp R.	Harvest	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Hatchery
	Ditidaht	Nitinat R.	Harvest	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Hatchery
San Juan	Pacheedaht	San Juan R.	Rebuilding (Secondary: Harvest)	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Wild
Clayoquot	Tla-o-qui-aht	Lower Kennedy R.	Rebuilding	Unknown	Integrated-Transition to Integrated-Wild
		Tranquil R.	Rebuilding	Unknown	Integrated-Transition
	Ahousaht	Megin R.	NA - Unenhanced	Wild - Stray Influenced	Integrated-Wild
		Moyeha R.	NA - Unenhanced	Wild - Stray Influenced	Integrated-Wild
		Cypre R.	Rebuilding	Unknown	Integrated-Transition
		Bedwell R.	Rebuilding	Integrated-Wild	Integrated-Transition
Nootka	Mowachaht/ M uchalaht	Burman R.	Rebuilding	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Transition
		Conuma R.	Harvest	Integrated-Hatchery	Integrated-Hatchery
		Gold R.	Harvest	Integrated-Hatchery	<i>Integrated-Transition*</i>
		Tahsis R.	Rebuilding	Integrated-Hatchery	<i>Integrated-Wild*</i>
		Leiner R.	Rebuilding	Integrated-Hatchery	<i>Integrated-Wild*</i>
Kyuquot	Kyuquot (Ka:'yu:'k't'h'// Che: k: tles7et'h') First Nation (KCFN)	Artlish R.	NA - Unenhanced	Wild - Stray Influenced	Integrated-Wild
		Kaouk R.	NA - Unenhanced	Wild - Stray Influenced	Integrated-Wild
		Tahsish R.	NA - Unenhanced	Wild - Stray Influenced	Wild
		Chamiss C.	NA - Unenhanced	Unknown	Wild
		Easy C.	NA - Unenhanced	Unknown	Integrated-Wild
		Malksope R.	NA - Unenhanced	Unknown	Wild

* italicized results may change with final input

References

APPENDIX 9: WCVI FIRST NATION CHINOOK BIOLOGICAL GOAL SETTING

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